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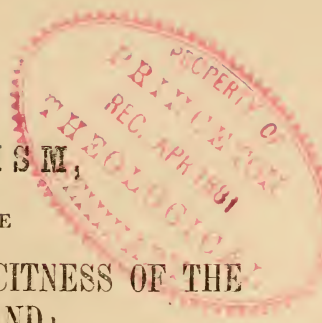












**BAPTISM,**  
IN THE  
**IMPORT AND EXPLICITNESS OF THE**  
**COMMAND;**


OR AN EXAMINATION OF  
**THE MEANING OF THE WORD BAPTIZO**  
IN ITS USES IN THE GREEK LANGUAGE. PARTICULARLY  
IN ITS RELIGIOUS APPLICATIONS  
BY THE JEWISH AND EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITERS,  
AND  
IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

WITH AN APPLICATION OF THE FACTS, SHOWING ON A VARIETY OF GROUNDS  
THAT AS USED WITH REFERENCE TO THE RITE OF CHRISTIAN PROFESSION,  
IT NECESSARILY MEANS *TO IMMERSE*;  
AND  
THAT ITS MEANING THUS DETERMINED IS DECISIVE OF THE ACT  
TO BE PERFORMED IN THE OBSERVANCE OF THE RITE.

WITH AN  
**INTRODUCTION**  
RELATING TO THE  
PROPER IMPORT AND USES  
OF THE  
ENGLISH WORDS BAPTIZE AND BAPTISM.

~~~~~  
BY EDMUND TURNEY,  
PROFESSOR OF BIBLICAL CRITICISM AND INTERPRETATION IN MADISON  
UNIVERSITY.


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NEW YORK:  
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ERRATA.—For “continual,” on the 22d page, 13th line, read, continued.

For “angellos,” in two or three instances, read, angelos.

Also, on the 10th page, first line, omit the words, “perhaps none.”

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**BAPTISM,**  
IN THE IMPORT AND EXPLICITNESS OF THE COMMAND.

—  
BY EDMUND TURNEY.  
—

**TESTIMONIALS.**

*From the Rev. Edward Lathrop, Pastor of the Tabernacle  
Baptist Church, New-York.*

New-York, Jan. 2d, 1852.

REV. PROF. TURNEY.

DEAR BROTHER :—I have received and examined the work on  
“BAPTISM, IN THE IMPORT AND EXPLICITNESS OF THE COMMAND,”  
which you were so kind as to send to me ; and I thank you sin-  
cerely for furnishing me with a source of so much profit and  
pleasure.

As it seems to me, the subject, in all its parts, is treated with  
so much thoroughness, and, at the same time, with so much can-  
dor and clearness, that the conclusions at which you aim will not  
only be seen to be just, but are also irrefutable.

If it were becoming for me to specify, and to recommend to  
others, particular portions of the work, I should make mention,  
first, of the introductory chapter on the “PROPER IMPORT AND  
USES OF THE ENGLISH WORDS, BAPTIZE AND BAPTISM.” Nothing,  
to my own mind, can be plainer than the truth of that which you  
have so ably illustrated and proved ; viz., that *Baptize* and *Bap-  
tism*, in their true acceptance, are the *only* words which convey  
to the English reader the full import and significance of the ori-  
ginal terms. In connection with this view, I have been especial-  
ly impressed with your argument, derived from the import of  
*baptizo*, as used by the Sacred Writers (“THE NEW TESTA-

MENT, ON THE IMPORT OF THE WORD BAPTISM"—pages 7-30). The reasoning which you there employ may be applied to a very great extent, as I conceive, with equal conclusiveness to the word "baptism," as found in the English version.

Allow me to specify, once more, as a section of great interest to my own mind, the chapter on "JEWISH USAGE" ("BAPTISM, IN THE IMPORT OF THE COMMAND"—pages 14-27).

Again, I thank you for your book, and I should rejoice in its wide circulation, as a means of conveying truth, on important subjects, in words which those who *think* cannot fail to comprehend.

Very truly and affectionately,

Yours, &c.,

EDWARD LATHROP.

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*From Rev. J. Dowling, D. D., Pastor of Hope Chapel Baptist Church, New-York.*

"I have perused with very much satisfaction the thorough and scholarly work of Professor Turney on "Baptism, in the Import and Explicitness of the Command," and especially the "Introduction relating to the proper import and uses of the English words Baptize and Baptism." The body of the work is a reprint of two valuable tracts, which have for some time been before the public, and by Baptists have universally been regarded as learned and conclusive, worthy of taking the rank of a STANDARD WORK on this subject. Many of Professor Turney's citations from Greek writers, are the fruit of his own laborious, original researches, especially those from the early Christian fathers, and constitute a valuable addition to the literature of this subject.



The Introduction is a most able, and as it appears to me, perfectly conclusive and unanswerable argument upon the proper import and uses of the English words *Baptize* and *Baptism*. No one who has read Professor Turney's "Scriptural Law of Baptism," and the two tracts reprinted in this volume, will doubt that he is in the fullest sense of the term, a Baptist; and it seems to me impossible that any one can read the argument contained in his Introduction, divested of prejudice, without arising from the perusal with the conviction that the scholars of the denomination, such as Hackett, Ripley, Williams, Conant, Turney, etc., as well as the great body of American Baptists, who contend for the retention of the English words *Baptize* and *Baptism*, are, to say the least, quite as faithful to their principles, and as worthy of their *name*, as the few who would substitute *immerse* and *immersion*—terms of more modern origin, and, as the Professor has most conclusively shown, of less significancy and sacredness.

This work of Prof. Turney, it is to be hoped, will effectually correct the error into which some Pædo-Baptist editors have fallen, viz.: that the *Baptist denomination* are responsible for the views of the few who advocate the expulsion of the words *Baptize* and *Baptism* from the English Scriptures."

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*From Rev. Stephen Remington, Pastor of the Stanton Street Baptist Church, New-York.*

PROF. TURNEY.

DEAR BROTHER:—I feel myself greatly obliged to you for your very excellent and learned *treatise* on *Baptism*, with which you have had the kindness to compliment me—a cursory reading of

which assures me that *it is the book for the times*. I deem your arguments against the substitution of the word *immerse*, for the word *baptize*, in the translation of the Scriptures, worthy of a candid perusal, and of very serious consideration by Baptists, and all who desire a version of the Holy Scriptures that shall express as perfectly as possible the mind of the Holy Spirit. We all know that the ordinance of Baptism *includes* immersion; and we also must know that immersion does not necessarily constitute a proper Baptism. I know, for instance, a Pædo-Baptist minister, who, at the special solicitation of a lady to be "*immersed*," performed the act, without using any formula of words; but she very consistently insisted that it was not baptism, and therefore went to the Baptists, where she was more than immersed—she was *baptized*.

I consider that the volume cannot be read but with profit. The arguments used, and the authorities therein quoted, command attention. Baptists views, as such, I believe, are clearly and concisely set forth, and ably defended. On this account, and for the cause of truth and righteousness, I anticipate, and hope for it, an extensive circulation.

S. REMINGTON.

NEW-YORK, Jan. 2, 1852.

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*From Rev. J. L. Hodge, D. D., Pastor of the First Baptist Church, Brooklyn.*

BROOKLYN, Dec. 31st, 1851.

REV. PROF. TURNEY.

DEAR BROTHER:—I thank you for a copy of your work on "Baptism in the Import and Explicitness of the Command," accompanied with an "Introduction on the import and uses of the

English words *baptize* and *baptism*." I have examined the arguments contained in your book, and have to confess myself not only deeply interested, but greatly instructed.

From my heart I thank you, dear brother, for the valuable service you have rendered the cause of Christ, and of sacred learning. The labor is well performed, and timely as it is able. I hesitate not to say, that could your facts and arguments receive from a certain class of our dear brethren the consideration to which they are entitled, even they would find themselves less willing to part with those dear old words by which Christ's precious ordinance has from time immemorial been designated.

I most earnestly desire that the book will have an extensive circulation,

Affectionately yours,

JAMES L. HODGE.

I am happy to unite my testimony with that of Rev. Dr. Hodge, to the great value of Prof. Turney's recent work on Baptism, and to the exceeding interest felt in its perusal. I have regarded his "Scriptural Law of Baptism," ever since it was published, as one of our most important works on that subject. The present, an interesting addition to that work, is most timely, and ought, as I doubt not it will, command a wide circulation.

E. E. L. TAYLOR,

*Pastor of the Strong Place Church, Brooklyn.*

*From Rev. B. T. Welch, D. D., Pastor of the Pierpont Street Baptist Church, Brooklyn.*

DEAR BROTHER TURNEY:—I have received and read with equal pleasure and profit, your recent work on Baptism, confirming and illustrating “the import and explicitness” of the high command of the great Head of the Church. I can cheerfully commend this interesting volume to the serious attention of all who feel an interest in this important question; and especially to all those who desire to comprehend, that they may intelligently obey the will of their Saviour.

The introductory chapter upon the use of the terms “Baptize” and “Baptism,” is peculiarly important at this time, and I think will render great service to the cause of truth. The distinction between the terms as appropriated and unappropriated, although sufficiently obvious, has been frequently overlooked, and the question thereby obscured. The lucid form in which this distinction is presented, conveys the idea distinctly to the mind of the reader of their true import, as employed by the sacred writers in designating the initiatory Christian rite; and the argument derived from it appears to me to be conclusive.

I am persuaded that the candor and Christian spirit that characterize this work, will be appreciated even by your opponents, while the force of its facts and logic will fasten conviction upon every mind open to the impressions of truth. In the hope that its circulation may be commensurate with its merits,

I am, Dear Brother,

Affectionately yours,

Jan. 2d, 1852.

B. T. WELCH.

*From Rev. James M. Haswell, missionary in Burmah and translator of the New Testament into the Peguan language.*

REV. PROF. TURNEY.

DEAR BROTHER :—I have read with much pleasure your work on Baptism, and think it well adapted to guide the candid inquirer into the truth on this interesting and important subject. I am much pleased with the introductory essay on the proper uses of the English words Baptize and Baptism and think your conclusions correct. The Baptist denomination cannot, in my opinion, without very serious injury to themselves, and greatly retarding the triumph of truth, discard the use of those words. Long may it be before they are yielded to the advocates of error.

Those upon whom has devolved the work of translating the scriptures into the languages of heathen nations, have encountered no greater difficulty than the one referred to on your 16th page.

Hoping that your work will be the means of much good,

I am,

Very affectionately yours,

J. M. HASWELL.

*From Rev. Wm. R. Williams, D. D.*

The subscriber has read with much interest, Prof. Turney's new Introduction to his tracts on Baptism; ~~the Introduction~~ discussing the meaning of the English word BAPTISM. It seems to the subscriber of remarkable clearness, and irresistible cogency.

WILLIAM R. WILLIAMS.





# INTRODUCTION.

## PROPER IMPORT AND USES

### OF THE ENGLISH WORDS

# BAPTIZE AND BAPTISM.

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DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE CHARACTERISTIC MEANING OF BAPTISMA AND ITS FULL FORCE AS A TECHNICAL TERM.

The following treatise was originally published in two parts entitled, "Baptism in the Import of the Command; or the meaning of the word *baptizo* in its application to the rite of Christian profession," and "The New Testament on the import of the word baptism, with suggestions respecting the Intent and Explicitness of the command enjoining baptism." The second, however, was regarded simply as the continuation and completion of the discussion commenced in the first, the object of which is two-fold, first, to show, especially from the various religious applications of *baptizo*, that as used in the New Testament, it means specifically to immerse; secondly, to show that the act enjoined in the institution of the rite of Christian baptism, and obligatory, of course, on the disciples of Christ to the end of time, must necessarily correspond with the meaning of the word as thus determined. With



the view, however, of guarding against an unnecessary confusion of ideas, far too common in the treatment of this subject, we call attention, by way of introduction, to a few suggestions designed to illustrate the distinction existing between the simple, characteristic *meaning* of the term in the New Testament, and the manner in which *its exact force as a technical term may be expressed*.

The fact that *baptisma* in the New Testament means *immersion*, is very far from showing that the word "immersion" is in all respects an *equivalent* for it in English. Its exact force as employed by the sacred writers,—the IDEA which it conveys to the mind of the reader, and the full expression of which is essential to a proper translation of the term into our own language, is inseparably identified with *its technical or appropriated use or application*. This remark is merely the recognition of a principle of translation universally admitted as indisputable, and which no skilful translator feels at liberty to disregard. We are accordingly, as will be obvious on investigation, shut up to the conclusion that *the only term by which BAPTISMA can be accurately and fully expressed in the English language is the word BAPTISM understood according to its real and only proper import*.

*Baptisma*, it is true, is not a term expressive of strictly religious, or spiritual ideas, in the same sense that this may be affirmed of *metanoia*, repentance, *palingenesia*, regeneration, and many similar terms, inasmuch as it designates an external act, immersion, and this act is equally what its name imports whether performed for secular or religious purposes. In the New Testament, however, it has a special application, an appropriated or technical use, which fails of being expressed by the simple terms "immersion," "dipping," "submersion," etc. The English term "Convention" in its simple distinctive import, denotes a *meeting*,—a meaning which is insepar-



able from it in the whole range of its use in the language. By being appropriated, however, to a particular kind of meeting, it has acquired a force, or conveys to the mind an idea, different from that expressed by the simple word "meeting;" nor would it be possible to render it with exactness into another language by a word simply synonymous with the latter term. The usage with respect to *baptisma* in the New Testament is altogether analogous.

NOTHING "BAPTISM" IN THE ONLY PROPER IMPORT OF THE TERM BUT IMMERSION.

That the word *baptism*, having been in familiar use in the language for nearly five centuries, is (like the terms "apostle," "evangelist," "heresy," "sabbath," and a great variety of other words originally derived from the Greek or Hebrew,) in all respects an *English word* will be readily and universally admitted. Nor will it be denied by any one who has proper views of the nature of the rite which it designates, that in its only true and proper meaning it denotes *immersion*. NO ONE CAN BE TRULY BAPTIZED WHO IS NOT IMMERSED. Whatever lacks this characteristic is *not baptism* in the proper sense of the term. The propriety of this position, in maintaining which the advocates of immersion have always been united, is obvious from the fact that when the word was introduced into the language it was appropriated to a rite claiming to be of Christ's appointment, and it was conceded that whatever was the nature of that appointment, such and such only must be true baptism.

It is susceptible, moreover, of the clearest historical proof, that the word was generally regarded as having the same import, as it was applied to the same rite, with the German *taufen* and the Dutch *doopen*, (each meaning to *dip* or *immerse*,) and designating, *like them*, as its recognized characteristic import, the act of immersion, although, like them, occasionally

applied to what was accepted as an admissible *substitute* for the original rite, to what was conceived to be baptism *in effect*, though not in form. In both of these respects *taufe* (immersion) in German, and *baptism* in English, were altogether synonymous and corresponding terms. Hence,—in connection with the natural mode of construction adapted to direct attention specifically to the element or means brought into requisition in observing the rite of baptism, to wit, “baptizing with *water*,” distinguishing water baptism from the baptism of the Spirit, and answering entirely to the Greek construction occurring in Luke 3: 16; Acts 1: 5, 11: 16, (see following treatise pages 34 and 15),—the customary phraseology which for a long time continued prevalent, was “*baptizing in*,” as “baptizing in water,” corresponding exactly with the construction of the Greek term *baptizo* in Mat. 3: 11; Mark 1, 8; John 1: 26; etc., (see pages 7—9,) and showing conclusively that the word was understood and familiarly used as an appropriate term for expressing a specific, definite *act*, an act which was from the nature of the case, an immersion. After the perversion of the ordinance, and the consequent perversion or misapplication of the word designating it, had become more extended, the Baptists appeared in England, maintaining that nothing could be properly called baptism but immersion. Hence their familiar use of the expressions “*baptized men*,” “the baptized,” etc., as distinguishing the subjects from those merely “sprinkled.” Hence, also, their characteristic appellation, *Baptists*—those who “baptize.” Nor has the denomination as such ever admitted that any were truly “baptized” who were not immersed. And it is owing chiefly to their influence, diffusing correct views of the *thing* designated, that the word has as actually used to such an extent retained its proper force; and that so large a proportion of those using the English language,

not Baptists merely, but great numbers in Pædobaptist communities, readily concede that nothing is baptism in the New Testament use of the term, but immersion.

Another cause which has operated powerfully in preserving for the term its appropriate force, is its use in the New Testament and in the familiar discourse of Christians, in various *figurative* applications, which find their only explanation in an allusion to the idea of immersion. Is it said that these decide nothing with respect to the literal acceptation of the term? We ask, where does a figure find its origin but in a *reality*? How can the word when figuratively used, direct the mind to the idea of immersion, unless this idea is in some way incorporated with its proper literal import? It is as true now, that it properly expresses the distinctive, characteristic idea of immersion or whelming, as when a celebrated divine of the Church of England in a former age, remarked, in commenting on Mat. 3:11, "The Spirit under the Gospel is compared to water, and that not a little measure, to sprinkle or bedew, but to *baptize* the faithful in."

As we cannot assume that the word in such passages as Mat. 20:22; Mark 10:38, "Are ye able to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with," is without meaning, so it is impossible to attach to it any meaning that does not involve the figure of an immersion or overwhelming. The idea of purifying, wetting, washing, sprinkling, etc., is never suggested to the mind of the reader. The remark of Dr. Bloomfield, suggested by the recognized import of the term in Mat. 20:22, is one in which all Pædobaptist commentators of note, are constrained to unite, "*This metaphor of immersion in water as expressive of being overwhelmed by affliction, is frequent both in Scriptural and classical writers.*" The import of the term as a designation of the gospel ordinance is thus fixed beyond the possibility of successful denial. It is

useless to urge the authority of modern dictionaries with definitions conformed to sectarian views and practices. On this point, as with reference to the word "priest," so perverted in modern usage, and many similar terms, the New Testament becomes, in connection with the established usage noticed above, its own lexicon, and the best of all possible lexicons,—an authority from which there is no appeal.

THE ONLY REASON URGED FOR ITS REJECTION ITS MISAPPLICATION—THIS INSUFFICIENT.

All arguments for the rejection of the word as a Scriptural term, must, therefore, be founded, not on the ground that its characteristic, proper import is not to immerse, but on its misapplication or abuse. The utmost that can be urged is, that in consequence of a perversion of the rite, *it has become extensively perverted or misapplied*; it is applied to acts which it does not properly designate, which are in reality *not baptism*. This, we believe, is the full extent of the objection urged against its continued use. And it only remains for us to inquire whether the perversion or misapplication of a religious term is in itself a sufficient reason for its rejection. The whole question is brought to this single issue, Is the fact that what in reality is not baptism, is, by a perversion of speech, extensively called such, a sufficient reason for rejecting the word as a Scriptural term? If we take the affirmative, we must in order to maintain the slightest claim to consistency, advocate a similar rejection with respect to all other religious terms similarly situated. A general principle assumed with reference to a particular case, while in numerous other cases precisely similar, it is unhesitatingly, and on good grounds rejected as inapplicable, betrays its own want of soundness, and is entitled to no regard.

There are few religious terms in the language which

have not been subjected to extensive perversion, in consequence of which they convey to the minds of multitudes ideas widely at variance with their true import. In most cases, however it would be considered the height of folly to reject their use as Scriptural terms, and thus leave them as such in the undisturbed possession of the enemies of the truth.

Few, for example, would contend for the rejection of the word "DEACON"; although it was introduced into the language under circumstances far less favorable to a general recognition of its proper import, than existed in the case of the word "baptism"; and it is still extensively applied by numerous bodies of Christians, as the church of England, the Episcopal and Methodist churches of this country, to those who are *not deacons* in any Scriptural acceptance of the term.

Again, the word "REGENERATION" in the confessions of faith and familiar usage of the majority of those using the English language, is used with reference to transactions in which nothing like regeneration in the true sense of the word, is even involved. And this has led to a very general misapprehension of its real import in the New Testament, as, for example, in the phrase Tit. 3 : 5, "the washing of *regeneration*"—language which is almost invariably misapplied by certain classes of Christians. But who regards this as a sufficient reason for abandoning the use of the word as a Scriptural term?

Again, the perversion of the word "CHURCH" is, to say the least, quite as extensive as that of the word "baptism"; and withal far more disastrous in its consequences, inasmuch as it relates, not to a single ordinance of the church merely, but to the conceptions formed of its organization in general, its vital relations to the world and to the kingdom of Christ.

And yet there are few, perhaps none, who would contend that on this account it should be rejected, and expunged from the word of God. And the ground of this decision is found in the fact, that understood according to its *true import*, it, like "baptism," expresses precisely what is expressed by the original term.

The same remarks are applicable to a great variety of Scriptural or religious terms in familiar use among Christians. Who has not observed that the words "grace" "repentance," "faith," "salvation," "justification," "conversion," "christian," "gospel," "evangelical," etc., are as familiar in the language of the Unitarian, the Universalist, the transcendentalist, the rationalist, as in that of the true and spiritual christian? They are familiarly applied to a thousand ideas which are entirely foreign to their proper import. And the reader is frequently far more in danger from this perverted use of them, of being beguiled into error, than is possible in the case of the word "baptism". But ought they on this account, we repeat, to be rejected as Scriptural terms by the friends of truth, and as such left to become the exclusive property of the advocates of error?

THE WORDS BAPTIZE AND BAPTISM CORRECTLY UNDERSTOOD  
THE ONLY PROPER TRANSLATION OF THE ORIGINAL TERMS.

Having thus shown that nothing is real baptism but immersion; that this was early recognized as the proper characteristic import of the term, a meaning which it has never lost; that it is in effect so defined in the New Testament itself; and that there exists no reason for its rejection which does not apply with equal force in the case of a large class of religious terms which it is universally admitted ought to be retained;—we proceed directly to the illustration of the proposition stated at the commencement of this discussion, to wit, the words "baptize" and "baptism" understood according



to their true or proper import, are the *only* accurate or proper expression or translation in English of the words *baptizo* and *baptisma* as applied in the New Testament to the rite of Christian profession.

That these terms when thus applied, are used in a *technical or appropriated acceptation*, is too obvious to escape the observation even of the most inattentive reader. They have acquired a use by which, (as in the case of "ecclesia" church, etc.) they, of their own force, or without any qualifying adjunct, present to the mind, not the simple idea of immersion or dipping, but the precise idea, which to the mind of one understanding the act enjoined to be immersion, is expressed in English by the words *baptize* and *baptism*. The import of the phrase "One Lord, one faith, one *baptism*," is not fully given in the rendering "one *immersion*," or "one *dipping*." What is expressed is not "immersion" simply, still less *one* act of immersion in distinction from many. The original term appropriately designates the *rite*, and the only proper designation of that rite in the English language is *baptism*. The "antitype," mentioned in 1 Pet. 3 : 20, is not found in "immersion" simply, but in that immersion which is "baptism." The apostle in Col. 2 : 12, did not mean simply to say, that Christians are "buried *with Christ*" in being buried in *immersion*, but by being buried in that kind of an immersion appropriately designated "baptism." A similar deficiency pertains to the expressions, "The *immersion* of John, (instead of the 'baptism' of John), was it from heaven?" "immersed unto John's *immersion*," etc. Nor is this deficiency less apparent in the use of the verb *immerse* for *baptize*. The declaration in Acts 9 : 18-19 respecting Saul of Tarsus in his state of weakness, is not simply, that "he arose and was *immersed* ; and receiving meat he was strengthened." An immersion of the body for other purposes than those of bap-

tism, would have been, under the circumstances, altogether natural, and would, moreover, have accorded entirely with the ancient Jewish customs. See Luke 11 : 38, where identically the same form of the original term is employed in an unappropriated sense,—the reference being to the custom of immersing the body in water so prevalent among the Jews, and so well authenticated, (as noticed on pages 21–24 of the ensuing work,) by the testimony of the early Christian Fathers and the Rabbinical writings. But in addition to this general sense, the term had acquired an appropriated or technical force, corresponding with that of our word *baptize* used in its true sense; and it is in this well known and familiar acceptation that the sacred historian uses it in Acts 9 : 18; and hence he says specifically that “he arose and was *baptized*.” The remark “John was *baptizing* in Enon,” conveys, like the original expression, the idea that he was performing a transaction which was, not “immersion” merely, but “baptism.” The inquiry of the Eunuch, as he came to “a certain water,” was not simply, “See here is water, what doth hinder me to be *immersed*.” To this he could not have imagined that any obstacle or hindrance would be interposed. But (although the idea of baptism is now for the first time introduced into the narrative), he is universally understood, from the simple well known force of the original term, as inquiring specifically “What doth hinder me to be *baptized*.”

The instances of figurative application of the term in the New Testament also indicate a reference, not simply to the idea of immersion or overwhelming, but equally, and not less clearly to the rite to which it is technically applied. In the expression, Luke 12 : 50 “I have a baptism to be *baptized with*,” there is manifest allusion not merely to the simple idea of an immersion, but of an immersion that was cus-



tomarily *administered or performed*, and for a specific purpose. In the obvious harshness resulting from the use in the case of an unappropriated term, as "I have an immersion to be *immersed with*," is probably to be found the reason that in *Bernard's version* of the New Testament, the original term is actually suppressed, and one of entirely different import introduced in its place, to wit, "I have an immersion to *undergo*!" It avails nothing to urge that this paraphrase expresses the general sense of the passage. Our Lord, with his mind upon the rite which he himself had already observed, evidently had a special reason for saying, "I have a baptism," not to "undergo," but "to be *baptized with*." And this purpose is not secured by suppressing the term, and substituting for it one of different import.

In the foregoing suggestions is probably to be found the explanation of the fact that the rite in the New Testament, (unless we regard† as an exception Heb. 6 : 2, in which a form of the *plural* is used, and in which there is a *two-fold* reference) is uniformly designated, not by the term which in classic Greek denotes an immersion, to wit, *baptismos*, but by a word which according to ordinary Greek usage, means *something immersed*,—*baptisma*. In the New Testament it is applied to that of which immersion may be affirmed or predicated in another respect, to wit, a rite of which the act involved is immersion. But however the usage may be accounted for, it is undeniable that both *baptisma* and *baptizo* are used by the sacred writers in a technical or appropriated sense, which finds its only representatives in English in the words *baptism* and *baptize* understood according to their real, their only proper import. In this there is nothing peculiar in their use. They merely follow the analogy of numerous other religious terms occurring in the Sacred Scriptures.

The Greek term ANGELOS properly means *messenger*,—see Mat. 11 : 10, “behold I send my messenger before thy face,”—a meaning which is inseparable from it in all its variety of usage. In the New Testament, however, it usually has an appropriated acceptance which would be but very imperfectly expressed by our word “messenger,” and which finds its only proper representative in English in a word, which like “baptize,” came into the language from the Greek—ANGEL. The expression in Mat. 13 : 39, is not simply “the reapers are the *messengers* ;”—messengers they are, and messengers they are here designated, but not messengers simply, but angelic messengers—*angels* ; just as immersion with reference to the rite of Christian profession, is not immersion merely, but baptismal immersion—*baptism*.

Again, the proper, generic meaning of the word EVANGELION is *glad-tidings*, a meaning which, as in the case of *baptisma*, it always possesses. In the New Testament, however, it has a technical or appropriated acceptance which is not expressed by the simple term “glad-tidings,” and which finds its only proper expression in the word GOSPEL, *not, however, as perverted and misapplied*, but only as it is like “baptize,” understood according to its true and proper import.

Another apposite illustration is found in the use of the word ECCLESIA, which properly means *assembly* or *congregation*,—see Acts 15 : 41, “and he dismissed the assembly,”—a meaning which it never loses,—see Heb. 12 : 23. In addition, however, to this general acceptance, it has as employed by the sacred writers a technical use which the word “assembly” or “congregation” fails to express, and which is expressed in English only by the word CHURCH. This term, although not less perverted than the word “baptize,” and although, in consequence, conveying, to say the least, as many

erroneous ideas, is, nevertheless, like "baptize," in its *true* import an exact representative of the original term. Nor can its place, more than that of the latter, be supplied by another term.

Again, the word *DIACONOS* properly means *minister* or *servant*, and is usually so rendered in the New Testament. Besides this general use, it has also an appropriated acceptance, in which, although losing no part of its customary signification, it cannot be properly rendered by the term "minister" or "servant." The expression "the church at Philippi with the bishops and *ministers* or *servants*," fails to give the import of Phil. 1:1; nor is 1 Tim. 3:8 properly expressed by, "the *servants* or *ministers* must be grave;" although the original term here actually means "minister" or "servant," (referring to the "serving" or "ministration," described in Acts 6:1-2), as really as in any instance of its occurrence. The only term by which its technical use can be expressed is the word *DEACON* which, although originally derived like "baptize" from the Greek, and not less perverted in its use, is universally regarded as a proper, and the only proper translation of the original *diaconos* as used in Phil. 1:1, and 1 Tim. 3:8.

A single additional illustration must suffice. The simple, characteristic import of the Hebrew term *SABBATH*, is "rest;" nor is it ever used in any other sense. And yet its appropriate translation in the Sacred Scriptures—the only term, in fact, by which it can be properly translated,—is not "rest," but the word "*SABBATH*," which, like "*baptize*," has become in all respects an English word, and is used in the same technical sense as the original term.

It accords with all analogy with respect to similar terms, therefore, that while *baptisma* means immersion, the requisition as indicated by its technical or appropriated use in the

New Testament, is not simply to be immersed, but to be *baptized*, the English term being in its true or proper import an exact, and the only proper expression of the Greek.

TRANSLATION OF THE TERM INTO THE LANGUAGES OF THE  
HEATHEN.

These remarks strikingly illustrate the advantage of the English language in the expression of Scriptural ideas, over the languages of the heathen. In no one thing does the missionary experience more embarrassment or difficulty in translating the Scriptures into a heathen tongue, than in its poverty of religious terms, terms having a special religious application. In the lack of these, his obvious duty is, instead of introducing into his translation mere barbarisms, to “express the meaning of the original *as exactly as the nature of the language will permit.*” Having no word denoting “gospel,” he must employ some term expressive of the simple, characteristic import of “evangelic”---*glad-tidings* (which to the mind of the Greek reader was just as apparent as that of *baptisma*, and can just as readily be expressed in another language); and then leave it gradually to acquire the same appropriated acceptation as is possessed by “evangelion” in Greek, or “gospel” in English. The Hebrew word “sabbath,” if he give its meaning at all—a meaning which is in all respects as specific and as obvious as that of *baptisma*,—he must translate by some term meaning simply “rest,” as “the seventh day is the *rest* of the Lord thy God,” Ex, 20 : 10, ---and await the time for it to acquire the technical force possessed, both in Hebrew and English, by the word “Sabbath.” In the lack of any term to answer to our word “church,” he can do no more than designate the primitive churches “assemblies” or “congregations,” hoping that the term thus employed will ultimately acquire the distinctive force of our word “church.” Without a term to supply the place of our word “repentance,” he must translate “*metanoia*”

by some general term, which will best convey the idea of a penitent change of feeling and purpose, and leave it to become identified, by continued use, with the peculiar idea attached by evangelical Christians to our word "repentance."

Where the religious or Christian literature of a people is for the first time to be formed, this work of appropriation is comparatively easy. In the English language, however, this has already been accomplished; and in most cases in such a manner that any change, even on supposition it were desirable, would now be impossible. We have terms expressive of the technical force of "evangelion," "metanoia," "palingenesia," "diaconos," "ecclesia," "sabbath," "baptisma," etc., as gospel, repentance, regeneration, deacon, church, sabbath, baptism, etc., and although they are abused and misapplied, there will be found to exist an impossibility of supplanting them, and supplying their place by others. The ideas which they express as used in the New Testament, have become so identified with, and inseparable from them, that they admit of no substitutes. It will always be obligatory on those using the English language to embrace and obey the "gospel," as the system of truth and salvation revealed by Christ, although many things familiarly *called* the gospel, they cannot too carefully avoid. The appropriate designation of a company of believers organized according to the principles of the gospel, will always be a Christian "*church*;" nor will the identification of the name with a corrupt hierarchy, a state establishment, etc., familiarly called "churches," ever release the disciples of Christ from the obligation of entering, in addition to becoming members of a Christian "congregation," into a veritable *church* relationship. Baptist churches, in speaking of the order of church officers mentioned in Tim. 3 : 8, and whose appropriate work is indicated in Acts 6 : 1, 2, will doubtless always continue to designate them by their dis-



tinative and all-sufficient appellation, “*deacons* ;” and that without exposing themselves to the charge of seeming to sanction the different orders of the ministry in the Romish or Episcopal hierarchies, in connection with which the term is so extensively, though improperly, used. What is expressed by the terms “repentance” and “regeneration” will always be an all-sufficient evidence of an interest in the blessings of the gospel, although a thousand things not affording this evidence, may continue to be, as now they are, familiarly called by these names. And so “baptism” will always be the appropriate, and the only appropriate designation of that rite instituted by Christ as a means of professing his gospel, however much the term may be abused by those who seek to identify with it ideas entirely foreign to the real nature of the thing designated. Simply to be “immersed,” is not to be “baptized ;” nor will the time ever arrive when this can be affirmed in truth,

It avails nothing to urge, that even if the substitution were made, and it were asserted in the passages relating to baptism, not that they were “baptized,” but simply that they were “immersed,” that, in most cases at least, it might easily be *inferred from the connection*, that the immersion was for the purpose of baptism. The same is true of almost every technical religious term in the New Testament. Were the word *angellos* to be rendered simply “messenger,” the connection might enable us to determine when it should be understood of angelic messengers, or angels. Were we to translate the word *ecclesia*, “assembly,” or “congregation,” it might be possible from the connection to determine all cases of reference to Christian “churches.” The question, however, is properly and simply this, Would this be a correct expression or translation of the original ? Is Mat. 13 : 25, properly expressed by the phrase, “the reapers are the *messengers* ?” or Mat. 18 : 17, by the injunction, “If he shall neglect to hear

them, tell it to the *congregation*? In these cases we instinctively reject the substitution, as an obvious impropriety. And yet it is in reality equally obvious that Eph. 4: 5 does not speak of "one immersion," or "one dipping" simply, but of "one *baptism*." It is not less certain that John the Baptist did more than merely to "immerse" the people "in water," which might easily have been done for other purposes than those of baptism,—and we cannot resist the conviction that in his use of *baptizo*, without any qualifying adjunct, in Mark 1: 8, he intended to *express* more than this, to wit, that he had "*baptized* them in water." Acts 9; 18, moreover, informs us not simply that Saul after his period of fasting, and before "receiving meat" was "immersed,"—which was a Jewish custom,—but that he was *baptized*. The apostle in Acts 10: 47 alludes to "water" not as the element in which the disciples might be "immersed," or "dipped," or "plunged," simply, (none of these terms fully express the idea), but in which they might be *baptized*. He inquired specifically and solely respecting their *baptism* in the true sense of that term—"Who can forbid water that these should not be *baptized*?"—and there is no other term in the language which expresses the same idea.

It avails nothing, moreover, to urge against the plain and undeniable conclusion at which we have thus arrived, that *baptizo* and *baptismos*—not, however, *baptisma*,—were used by Greek authors and even in the New Testament, in an unappropriated or general acceptation. The same was true of *ecclesia*, *angellos*, *diaconos*, *metanoia*, and numerous other religious terms. And yet it will not be denied that they just as really possess a distinct, clearly marked additional or technical force, which can find its only appropriate expression or translation in English in the words, church, angel, deacon, repentance, etc. And it must be obvious even to the most

inattentive reader of the New Testament, that precisely the same thing is true of the word *baptizo* (to baptize.)

#### EVILS RESULTING FROM A REJECTION OF THE TERM.

Having thus established, beyond all ground for dispute, the position that the only proper expression or translation in the English language, of *baptisma* as used in the New Testament, is the word "baptism" understood according to its true and only proper import; and that no reason can be urged for its rejection which does not apply with equal force in the case of a large portion of the religious terms in the language, we add a few suggestions relating to the consequences of its rejection as a Scriptural term to the cause of truth.

For the sake of illustration we call attention to the history of *baptizo* as a technical term, in the Greek language. For several centuries after the establishment of the Christian church, it continued to be applied exclusively to acts of immersion. At a later period, upon a corruption or perversion of the ordinance, it began to be used with reference to what was permitted in extraordinary cases to take the *place* of the original rite, as a substitute, and was conceived to be *baptism in effect*, though not in act or in form. Acts of affusion by thus usurping in special cases the place of the rite, usurped also its *name*, and were technically designated *baptisma*; while at the same time the term came gradually to be used almost exclusively in the technical sense which it now possesses. Now in this state of things, what was the duty of those in the Greek churches who were disposed to resist the innovation? Ought they, on the assumption that the word, in its technical use, had become "ambiguous" or "equivocal" to have abandoned it as a Scriptural term? Ought they, on the plea that it did not as technically used express without ambiguity to the minds of their cotemporaries its original import; that—as is sometimes urged with respect to the English word "baptize,"—it could not be determined with certainty what



was done to one who was said to be "baptized"—ought they to have actually expunged it from the Greek Testament, and have supplied its place with some alleged "unequivocal" term meaning immersion, as *katadusis*? The consequence of resorting to such an expedient can easily be imagined. The word *baptisma* would have been left to become appropriated still more and more to that which it did not properly designate; and the mass of the Greek church in adhering to the original *name* of the rite, would have adopted as baptism whatever it was allowed by common consent to express. All attempts to convince them that what was required of them was "katadusis" *in distinction from* "baptisma" would have been useless. Happily for the cause of truth the course pursued was the reverse of this. It was very properly maintained, that notwithstanding this abuse and misapplication of the term in its technical use, which a corruption of the ordinance had occasioned, its proper import was "immersion"; that it was an undeniable misnomer to speak of one as "baptized" who had not been immersed; and that, consequently, all acts which had thus usurped either the name or the place of baptism should be abandoned. This was a position which carried with it the evidence of truth; and the result is seen in the present adherence on the part of the Greek church to the exclusive practice of immersion.

The Baptists of this country and of England are accomplishing a similar work among those who use the English language; and the success which has attended their efforts thus far encourages the hope that the time is not distant when the use of the words "baptize" and "baptism" in connection with mere acts of sprinkling or wetting, will be accompanied in the minds of the great mass of the people, with an irrepressible conviction of its manifest impropriety.

Let them, however, abandon the use of the word as a Scriptural term, and leave it to become identified by common consent with acts to which it is improperly applied, and they would soon have occasion to feel that they had surrendered their vantage ground,—foolishly thrown away their most effective weapon for defending and promoting the truth. The mass of those using the English language will always feel that the gospel requirement expressed by the original term, is fully met in their being “*baptized* ;” that to be “*baptized*” is precisely *the* thing enjoined, and *all* that can be required ; and whatever ideas they are left to attach to that word, such will be their course of action. The true policy, therefore, for the friends of the truth, obviously is, by a continual use of the term, and a diffusion of a knowledge of the facts by which its true import may be understood, to seek to identify it in the conceptions of the people at large, exclusively with the idea which alone it properly expresses, immersion. There should be no relinquishment of the position so long and so successfully maintained, that no one can be truly baptized who is not immersed.

The ultimate design of the following treatise, therefore, is not more to show that the Greek term *baptizo*, as used in the New Testament, means *to immerse*, than to promote a familiarity with those facts which will lead the reader to identify this idea with the word “*baptism*.” The word “*baptize*” is accordingly not unfrequently employed in translating passages which refer to immersion for secular purposes, where the word “*immerse*” would strictly be the appropriate term to express the idea. The substitution in such cases is made in order to render it more apparent to the eye of the reader, that the original term is the identical one occurring in connection with the rite of Christian *baptism*. For a similar reason the word “*immersion*” is sometimes em-

ployed as a designation of the rite. A sufficient explanation will be found in the nature of the argument. The object had in view is to direct attention specifically to the *act* involved in the observance of the rite and properly designated by its name, viewed apart from its nature in other respects, or as distinguished from other acts claimed to be baptism. It is so used, of course, in perfect consistency with the obvious and undeniable fact, that the only appropriate and distinctive designation of the rite as such in English is "baptism." There is the utmost propriety in representing that *baptizo*, in distinction from any other characteristic meaning claimed for the word, as to wet, to wash, to sprinkle, etc., means in all its variety of usage, specifically and simply *to immerse*. This representation so common in the discussion of the subject of baptism, is,—although the fact is frequently overlooked,—in entire harmony with the obvious fact, that in the New Testament the term possesses an additional technical force, arising from its appropriated use, which finds its only expression in English in the word "baptism". It is entirely parallel with the representation, so frequent in works upon church polity, that the primitive churches in distinction from any thing like hierarchies or national establishments, were simply "congregations," separate congregations of believers associated for the worship of God. No one, however, understands this as an admission that the word "congregation" is the appropriate designation in English of the primitive "churches." Nor is there the slightest occasion for any greater confusion of ideas with respect to the relative and distinctive import of the words "baptize" and "immerse" as used in controversial works on the subject of baptism. The following treatise is designed to prove that the original term "*baptizo*" in the whole range

of its use in the Greek language, as far down as to the fourth century, was uniformly employed, either literally or figuratively, with reference to the specific act of immersion. At the same time it is freely recognized as equally true, and equally obvious that in the New Testament it has a technical force which can be expressed in English only by the word "baptize",—a word which in its characteristic and only proper import corresponds exactly with the original term.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS.

In the light of these facts, we are constrained, we remark in conclusion, to regard the substitution of "immerse" for "baptize," by some so strongly insisted on, as being, even on the ground on which it is urged, on all recognized or admissible principles of translation,

1. UNNECESSARY. If we translate "baptizo" in its appropriated or technical use, into English by an unappropriated term as "immerse" or "dip," why not apply the same rule in the case of all words similarly situated? Why not render "ecclesia," which, in precisely the same sense that "baptisma" means "immersion," signifies "congregation" or "assembly," which is always used, either literally or figuratively,—see Heb. 12 : 23,—in this sense in the New Testament, which presented this idea to the mind of the Greek reader just as clearly and distinctly as does the English word "congregation" or "assembly,"—see Acts 19 : 32,—why not render it by these unperverted, unequivocal terms? Why become exposed to the charge of "obscuring" or "covering up" its simple characteristic import by employing for it one of the most perverted and ambiguous terms in the language? Why express it by a word which, as commonly used, designates a hierarchy, a state establishment, a Christian sect or denomination, a house

of religious worship, almost every thing aside from the simple idea of an "assembly" or "congregation" of Christians? Why not at once abandon this equivocal, much abused word "church?" Why not translate "diaconos" in Tim. 3 : 8, which properly means "minister" or "servant," in precisely the same sense that "baptisma" means "immersion," which presents this idea in this instance to the mind of one reading the Greek Testament, with as much distinctness as in its use in John 12 : 26, "If any man *serve* me, let him follow me, and where I am, there shall my *servant* be,"—why not then translate it "servant," "The *servants* must be grave?" Why render it by a term which is appropriated to the officials and dignitaries, "deacons" and "archdeacons,"—certainly not the *arch-servants*,—of the Romish or Episcopal hierarchies? Why consent to render "hagioi" which properly means "holy persons" by a word which is applied by way of distinction, to a class of men, many of whom were among the worst characters whose names have ever stained the pages of history? Why seem to confound the primitive Christians with the "canonized" prodigies of cruelty and depravity of Papal Rome, by calling them "Saints?" Why designate the great Propiciator and Intercessor of the gospel by a term, which explained by any modern application of it, would present to the mind the most erroneous and repugnant ideas,—“the High *Priest* of our profession?"

Why should these terms, together with the words "regeneration," "gospel," "christian," etc., terms which have *always*, from the very time of their introduction into the language, been used in the same perverted sense, be scrupulously retained, in preference to terms unperverted, unambiguous, expressive of the simple characteristic import of the original words in their unappropriated use,—while at

the same time it is represented as a crime to continue to designate in the Sacred Scriptures, the ordinance of Christian profession, by its distinctive and only appropriate name "*baptism?*"—a word which has the important advantage over most of the terms alluded to, of having come into the language with its distinctive import fully recognised in its customary use,—whose meaning is so inseparably identified with its various figurative uses in the language, that it can never be lost,—which is actually explained as meaning immersion in the New Testament itself; and which, as it indicates exclusively in the Scriptures that which was immersion, Baptists have always maintained is improperly applied to any other transaction. This designation of the ordinance, it is urged, should be surrendered, abandoned, discarded as a Scriptural term, merely because a portion of the Christian community persists in calling that baptism which is not such in reality; although the perversion is far less extended in its range, and is far more easily exposed, than that of most of the terms which are so unhesitatingly retained. We are at a loss to determine which most should excite our surprise, the *presumption* or the palpable *inconsistency* of such a demand.

2. The substitution of "immerse" for "baptize" would involve a positive and palpable ERROR IN TRANSLATION. Instead of being the "correction" of an error, it would be, not merely the expunging from the Word of God of the proper expression, but the introduction into its place of one actually unsuitable and defective. If it be an error to translate "angelos" in Mat. 13: 39, "messenger", or "ecclesia" in Mat. 17: 18, "congregation", or "sabbath" in Ex. 20: 10, "rest," or "diaconos" in Phil. 1: 1, "servant", it is equally an error, *and for precisely the same reasons*, to translate "*baptisma*" by an unappropriated term as "immersion," or



“dipping,” when there is in the language a word which in its true import expresses the meaning with exactness. To make the substitution, would be, not as in the case of our missionaries to the heathen, to give the ordinance a distinctive name in the language, which it already has,—the name which it will always continue to have, and which although it may be perverted or improperly used, is properly applied to no transaction which does not involve the act of immersion:—but it would be, on the contrary, actually to set aside its appropriate, distinctive name, and to attempt to supply its place with an unappropriated term, as “immerse” or “dip,”—a term which would always from the necessity of the case be used in distinction from the well known designation of the rite as such “baptism,”—just as *katadusis* was used in distinction from *baptisma* in the Greek language, although having the same generic or characteristic sense with it. The missionary is obliged in such cases from necessity either to employ some term of general import expressive of the simple, generic sense of the original word, and to seek to give it an appropriation as the distinctive name of the object designated, or else to select some word of analogous use already appropriated to heathen ideas or customs or institutions, and give it a new appropriation, leaving it, of course, to possess all the ambiguity naturally resulting from this two-fold appropriation. The word “ecclesia” must either be rendered simply “congregation;” or some term must be selected and appropriated which is already used with reference to a heathen religious community, composed, perhaps, chiefly of the priesthood, or at least of the devotees of idolatrous worship. In either case its use in the New Testament must be accompanied with the explanation of the living teacher indicating that as thus used it is to be

taken alone in its *Christian* acceptance. The words "episcopos," "diaconos," "poimen" must either be rendered in accordance with their simple, generic sense, "overseer," "servant," "shepherd" (not "pastor"); or terms must be employed already having a somewhat analogous appropriation, leaving the reader in danger of confounding the officers of the Christian church with the civil or religious functionaries of the heathen. The mode of designation in either case must be far less explicit than that by which in the English New Testament are presented to our minds the "bishops and deacons" of apostolic times, who, as we are expressly taught, were the recognised officers of the several churches, Tit. 1: 5-7; Phil. 1: 1. The word *graphie* must either be rendered according to its literal import as an unappropriated term, "writing," thus making 2 Tim. 3: 16, assert, "*All writing* is given by inspiration of God," or by some term already appropriated to designate *the sacred writings of the heathen*, thus making the word of God to the mind of a heathen seem to affirm that these sacred writings "are given by inspiration," or "must be fulfilled," or "cannot be broken," or are "profitable for instruction."

In most of these cases the translator may prefer to select, as being upon the whole the most suitable to his purpose, the appropriated term, than to employ one wholly unappropriated, even though it be at the hazard of having it confounded in its use with its original and customary heathen application. The difficulties presented are, however, in either case, of no slight character; and the translation, although in the best sense "faithful," is, nevertheless, in these particulars, far more ambiguous, far more liable to be misunderstood by the unassisted reader, in a word, a far less perfect transcript of the original in its expression of religious ideas, than are the English Scriptures.



In many cases, however, the missionary is able to find no appropriated term used with an analogous application, and is shut up to the necessity of employing one entirely unappropriated. In rendering *angelos*, for example, in Rev. 12: 7; 1 Cor. 6: 3, he is obliged, unless he introduce some extended or unpleasant paraphrase or interpretation, to translate, not "Michael and his *angels*," but "Michael and his *messengers*,"—"the dragon and his *messengers*."—"Do ye not know that we shall judge *messengers*?" Such a rendering in the Burman or Karen or Peguan language, may be regarded "faithful;" but we ask—and we solicit the reader's particular attention to the point of the inquiry—*Would it be "faithful" in English?* Shall we, would it be proper that we should, in this respect *imitate* these foreign versions, in our own language? It avails nothing to ask, as is often done in a similar case, "Shall we then make one translation for the heathen, and have another for ourselves?" The case is too clear to admit of argumentation. The irresistible decision of the unsophisticated mind is that these foreign versions *ought not* in such a case to be imitated; that the proper translation in English is not "messengers," but "angels;" although the latter term, as commonly used and understood, is very far from presenting to the mind with distinctness the simple, characteristic import of the Greek "*angelos*," from *angelo*, to convey a message; yet as being appropriated, it is, nevertheless, the only suitable and "faithful" expression of the original. The case is in all respects equally clear as to the manner in which "baptisma" should be rendered.

Although it is easy to conceive how two terms of similar import might come simultaneously to be appropriated to the same object, it is as impossible that the word "immerse" or

“dip” should ever usurp in the English language the place already appropriated to the word “baptize,” so as to possess the same religious force or expressiveness, or even cease to be used in distinction from it, as it would be to prevent “katadusis” from being used in distinction from “baptisma” in the Greek language, or to make “writing” synonymous with “Scripture,” or “messenger” with “angel,” or “congregation” with “church” in English. Let the attempt be made, and the result in each case would be the same: and we should have instead of ‘the *Scripture* requiring that those who enter the *church* (not a hierarchy, or national establishment, but the “church”) shall be *baptized*,’ not sprinkled, but “baptized,” actually “baptized”—instead of these appropriated and expressive terms we should have, “The *Writing* requiring those who enter the *congregation* to be *immersed* or *dipped*!’ The query would irresistibly arise in the mind, What congregation? What writing? Immersion for what purpose? If the *Scripture*, why is it not so designated? If for the purpose of *baptism*, why is it not so expressed? No one fails at once to perceive an essential and clearly marked difference in the import of these two classes of expressions. It is not possible by any process of reasoning to bring the mind to feel that they are synonymous. And the difference is equally clear and palpable in the case of *each* of the corresponding terms which are italicized. Nor is the deficiency involved in the use of the word “immerse” or “dip” in many cases less apparent even though it be connected directly with some explanatory adjunct. The difference in the force of the expressions, “*baptized into Christ*,” and “*dipped into him*,” or “*immersed into him*,” is too obvious to require remark.

The delightful associations of thought and feeling which

the appropriated name of the rite of Christian profession, as used in such passages as 1 Pet. 3 : 21 ; Eph. 4 : 5 ; Gal. 3 : 27, suggested in the minds of the primitive Christians, and which in the minds of those following their example, are identified with the idea of being "*baptized*," do not belong to the words "immersion," "dipping," "plunging," etc. These latter terms have no appropriated use which adapts them to direct the mind beyond a mere external act. Let the change be introduced, and the "one baptism" of the gospel becomes merely "one immersion." The harbinger of the Messiah is bereft of his distinction as "John the Baptist,"—a distinction acquired from his administering the rite "baptism,"—and becomes merely "John the *Immerser* ;" and by analogy, *Baptists*, finding nothing in the New Testament respecting "*baptism*," and taking the Scriptures in their manner of presenting truth, for their guide, would become in the current phraseology, merely "Immersers" or "Immersionists," an appellation which would almost of necessity be interpreted as denoting that they stand for the vindication, *not of "baptism" as such*, but of that which with their own consent would be left to be regarded simply as a *mode* of "baptism!"

We can scarcely conceive of a greater perversion of speech than that to which the advocacy of this unwarrantable substitution has given currency, that the English Scriptures in the use of such terms as "baptize" and "baptism" are *untranslated*. Untranslated! How, indeed, could our translators have rendered into English the original term so as to express its technical force, if not by an English word, which, besides having been in the language for some two or three centuries, was when correctly understood *perfectly equivalent*? In using for the Hebrew *sabbath* or *shabbath* the

English word "sabbath," did they not translate it? How else could they have rendered it and have rendered it properly? In expressing *angelos* by "angel," *prophetes* by "prophet," *philosophia* by "philosophy," did they not translate them? What other English terms could they have employed to represent their appropriated or technical import? Or did they write in Greek or leave the Scriptures untranslated into English, in using "genealogy" for *genealogia*, "hypocrisy" for *hypocrisis*, "idolatry" for *eidololatreia*? so in the use of the words "proselyte," "exorcist," "poet," "synagogue," "epistle," "parable," "psalm," "hymn," "amen," "prophesy," etc.? As well might it be assumed that the apostles wrote to the Greeks in Hebrew in using "amen" for the Hebrew *amen*, "sabbaton" for *sabbath*, etc. Did Cowper write in Greek when he said,

*"Philosophy baptized*

In the pure fountain of eternal love  
Hath eyes indeed?"

Is not the word "baptized," as also "philosophy" from the Greek *philosophia*, in all respects as much *at home* in the connection in which it here occurs, as any word in the sentence? And is it not used in a manner adapted to carry to the mind the irrepressible conviction that, in distinction from any perverted use which it may have acquired, it is thus employed in its *true sense*,—that it expresses its simple, proper, distinctive import, presenting the figure of an *immersion*, and at the same time not less distinctly the idea of a religious, baptismal immersion. As the former idea, that of immersion, is inseparable from a proper conception of a real baptism, so also is the latter. No one wishing to express the full idea which Cowper obviously intended to express, would say simply "philosophy *immersed*." No one wishing to translate the sentence into another language,

as the German, would have the presumption to suppose that he could do justice to the sense, by employing a term meaning simply to "immerse." And yet the point of difference, obvious and undeniable as it appears in the light of this familiar example, is precisely similar to that which pertains to the word when used as a Scriptural term. The sacredness of import which properly belongs to it, corresponding entirely with that of the original term, can no more be attached to the word "immerse" or "dip" or "plunge," than the religious force of "graphe," "angelos," or "ecclesia" can be expressed by the word "writing," "messenger," or "congregation." And the attempt in either case, and equally in each, would involve a positive and undeniable *error in translation*.

3. Such a substitution, moreover, involving a surrender and abandonment by the friends of truth of the appropriate name of the gospel ordinance as a Scriptural term, could not be otherwise than highly INJURIOUS to the cause of truth. Those who have labored long and hard to identify the idea of what was originally intended merely as a substitute, with the word "baptism," would in future find their task a comparatively easy one; and the world would be presented with the singular spectacle of *Baptists* discarding that which gave them their *name*, and leaving it to become, by a perverted use, almost exclusively appropriated to that which they believe it does not of right express: those who have always maintained, and justly maintained, that no one can be truly "baptized" who is not immersed; that there is in reality but *one* mode of "baptism," conceding that there are properly several modes of "baptism;" that those who are merely sprinkled are properly said to be "baptized!" Can any one believe that the truth would have nothing to suffer from



the adoption of such a position? or that faithfulness to the truth even as it respects the manner in which it shall be expressed, does not demand that such a result should be avoided. Is it not as clear as the sunlight that if it be conceded that sprinkling is "baptism" in the proper sense of the term, it will be impossible to convince the great mass of those speaking the English language that they are not sufficiently baptized in being sprinkled? May the day be far distant when through a failure to discern things which so manifestly differ, those who have so long stood for the defence of "*baptism*," shall be led to adopt a position so suicidal to themselves, and so disastrous to the cause of truth and of God.

Nor does the evil end here. The *principle* in accordance with which it is demanded that the distinctive and only appropriate name of the Christian rite, "baptism," shall be expunged from the New Testament, and an unappropriated term, as "immersion" or "dipping," be put in its place, opens the door for the introduction and defence of numerous similar changes with respect to other terms. Indeed, they cannot consistently be avoided. It will not, we presume, be denied that *ecclesia* means "congregation," and *diaconos* "servant," and *angelos* "messenger," and *graphe* "writing," etc., in precisely the same sense that *baptisma* means "immersion" or "dipping;" and those who contend for the use of the latter terms, will see no ground on which they can object to the adoption of the former. And whatever may be urged in behalf of such changes on the plea of obtaining "pure versions," we hesitate not in regarding our present version of the Scriptures as incomparably "purer" and more "faithful" in its expression of religious ideas, than one executed in accordance with such a "principle" of trans-

lation. It will suffice even with the ordinary reader of the Scriptures, that we appeal in proof of this remark to a few of the numerous attempts which have been made actually to apply and exhibit this principle in execution.

In a version of the New Testament made for the use of those who years ago adopted the substitution of "immerse" for "baptize," and extensively approved and circulated by them, the principle on the ground of which this substitution is made and defended, has for the most part been faithfully and consistently carried through the entire translation. "Ecclesia," for example, is "always translated *congregation*" instead of "church." Thus we have in Acts 2: 47, the declaration that daily additions were made, not to the "church," but to the "*congregation*." In Mat. 18: 17, it is made the duty of the aggrieved brother to tell his complaint, not to the "church," but to the "*congregation*." Acts 12: 5 asserts, not that "prayer was made for Peter continually by the church," but by the "*congregation*." 2 Cor. 8: 19 refers to "the brother who was chosen by the *congregations*," etc. And these changes, it is urged, are introduced for "the best of reasons." And it is worthy of special notice that these "reasons" as given are identical with those constantly urged for the substitution of "immerse" for "baptize," to wit, that the word "ecclesia"—a fact which certainly cannot be denied—in these and other cases of its use, actually *means* "congregation;" and that "the word *church* [the appropriate term] has unhappily grown into a *term of art*, and has by different persons a variety of *secondary ideas* annexed to it."

Again, in Acts 23: 8 we are presented with the grave, yet amusing assertion, "The Sadducees say there is no resurrection, neither (good nor evil) *messenger!*" In John 20: 12



Mary is represented as meeting at the sepulchre “two *messengers*.” Col. 2 : 18 is made to speak simply of “the worship of *messengers*.” Acts 10 : 7 of “the *messenger* who spoke to Cornelius.” 1 Cor. 6 : 3 presents the interrogation, “Do you not know that we judge (or are to judge) *messengers* ?” And so in numerous similar instances. And the “reasons” urged in defence of the translation are the same as those so often assigned for the substitution of “immerse” for “baptize,” to wit, that the term “angel” does not sufficiently “indicate the meaning” of the original term, being as commonly used expressive of “nature” rather than of “office”; and that “it is universally admitted that the term ‘messenger’ *exactly corresponds* with the Greek word *angelos*,” is “*unequivocally* indicative of its meaning,” is “exactly correspondent,”—assertions for which there is certainly as much reason as that the word “immersion” “exactly corresponds” with “baptisma” in its appropriated use in the New Testament; although in both cases the position in its application to the case in hand, is utterly without foundation, the obvious distinction in the force of words as appropriated and unappropriated being entirely overlooked in its assumption.\*

\* It is worthy of note that in subsequent editions the word “messenger,” although still claimed as the only “perspicuous” and “unequivocal” rendering, is expunged from some of the passages cited above, and the word “angel,” although still represented as an “ambiguous,” “equivocal,” “erroneous” translation, is by a strange inconsistency actually *restored*,—showing how much more easily a position may be made to appear in a plausible light in *theory*, than in *practice*. And we doubt not that a similar dissatisfaction would be felt with the substitution of “immerse” for “baptize,” by many who are now on specious but false representations led to favor its introduction, provided they could see the work once accomplished. Is it wise in a case involving so

Again, the word "*repentance*" whose proper and distinctive meaning as an appropriated *scriptural* term is sufficiently explicit,—however variously it may be interpreted or applied,—and which has become so identified with our religious literature, that, as in the case of the word "baptize," its place can be supplied by no other, is in accordance with the "principle" adopted, unhesitatingly set aside, and on ground equally plausible, to say the least, with that assumed with respect to the word "baptize," to wit, that "according to the common acceptation of the words," or as understood according to the "vulgar idiom," the word "repent" is ambiguous and equivocal; that "it is evident a man may often justly be said to repent, who never reforms"; and that "a man may be said just as properly to repent of a *good* as of a *bad* action."

Again, in the application of this same principle we have in Mat. 24 : 14, instead of "This *gospel* of the *kingdom*"—"this *good tidings* of the *reign*." In 2 Pet. 3 : 18, instead of "Grow in *grace*"—"grow in *favor*." In 2 Cor. 12 : 9, instead of "My *grace* [as imparted] is sufficient for thee"—"sufficient for you is my *favor*." In Mat. 28 : 20, "I am with you always, even to the conclusion of *this state*" !

We refer to these changes, which are simply specimens of those which run through the entire volume, chiefly to show how easily an erroneous or fallacious principle of translation may be carried, and consistently carried, far beyond what is perhaps contemplated or even desired by many of its advocates. Once adopted, it is very naturally, and with undiminished speciousness, as we have seen, applied, and legitimate interests to agitate the public mind with the matter of doing that which would no sooner be effected, than a very general desire would doubtless be felt to have *undone*?

mately applied, so as to leave the English *Scriptures* bereft of a large portion of what are the most appropriate and expressive *Scriptural terms* in the language. The statute book of *religion* exhibiting a strange and painful deficiency of distinctive *religious phraseology*! A volume in which there is nothing found respecting "baptism," or the "church," or "repentance towards God," and from which every thing respecting the "gospel" or the "grace of God" has been expunged in numerous familiar passages where the reader has been accustomed to meet with these terms, is presented as an English *New Testament*! as an "improved," a "more faithful" version of this Testament, from which various important "imperfections" and "obscurities" have been removed! Nor will those who adopt the principle that all appropriated religious terms, if perverted or misapplied, or liable to be misunderstood by those who are subject to erroneous religious teaching, or possessing as commonly used various significations, must be rejected, and their place supplied by *unappropriated* terms expressive of the simple characteristic import of the original words *as unappropriated*, be able to oppose any objection to the reception and circulation of such a version as the "pure" word of God. Indeed these changes are put forth and recommended for adoption with their *expressed sanction* to the principle on which they are made; and they thus become responsible for virtually, though it may be undesignedly, *encouraging* its application in these particular instances.

But there is still another evil of no slight magnitude resulting from the adoption and advocacy of this erroneous principle of translation, which is seen in the *unnecessary uneasiness and dissatisfaction* respecting the use of *Scriptural language* which it occasions. To disturb the confidence of

the public in the correctness and propriety of the phraseology in which they have been accustomed to read the Scriptures from their childhood, without the existence of any sufficient reason, cannot be otherwise than injurious to the cause of truth. In nothing are the English Scriptures more worthy of respect and confidence than in the use of such terms as "gospel," "baptism," "angel," "world," "church," "repentance," etc., words which, however they may be perverted, or used in different acceptations, are when properly understood as scriptural terms, adapted to express the force of the original words with exactness, and which as answering this purpose have *no substitutes* in the language. The same fallacious reasoning which would, on the ground of their perversion, set them aside, would demand that, after the corruption of Scriptural doctrine and practice in the middle ages, the *original* words should have been expunged from the Greek Testament, and their places supplied with those which were unappropriated and consequently unperverted and, as is urged, "unequivocal." And yet it is chiefly on the ground of the use of these very terms, that attempts have been made to shake the public confidence in the integrity and suitableness for circulation of the volume in which they are with so much propriety and expressiveness employed.

NOTE.—Since the foregoing remarks were prepared and nearly through the press, the author's attention has been directed to the recognition by Dr. Carson of a distinction in the import of the word rendered "Scripture" in 2 Tim. 3 : 16, which so exactly falls in with our principal position, and affords so apposite an illustration of its obvious correctness, that we cannot refrain, even at the hazard of seeming to introduce a repetition, from alluding to it. In his exposition of the phrase rendered, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," he maintains in opposition to those who deny the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures,

that the word *graphie* means "writing." He says, "As soon as any person becomes acquainted with *the meaning* of the terms in the expression, it is impossible for him to withhold his assent. What is a *writing*, etc.?" "Let any man try to give a *definition* of the word *writing*"—"The *writing* is inspired, etc."—"If a man cannot see this in *the very meaning* of the terms in the expression, etc." And yet while thus maintaining that "the meaning," "the very meaning" of the word *graphie* is "writing," he remarks in the same argument in opposition to those who would render the passage "*All writing* divinely inspired, is, etc.," that he has "many reasons for preferring the common version of the passage" (all Scripture) to that which would render it *writing*. And he has occupied not less than *forty pages* with considerations designed to prove that the original term "signifies *Scripture*" in distinction from "writing," and can only be so translated with correctness.

PART I.

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BAPTISM

IN THE

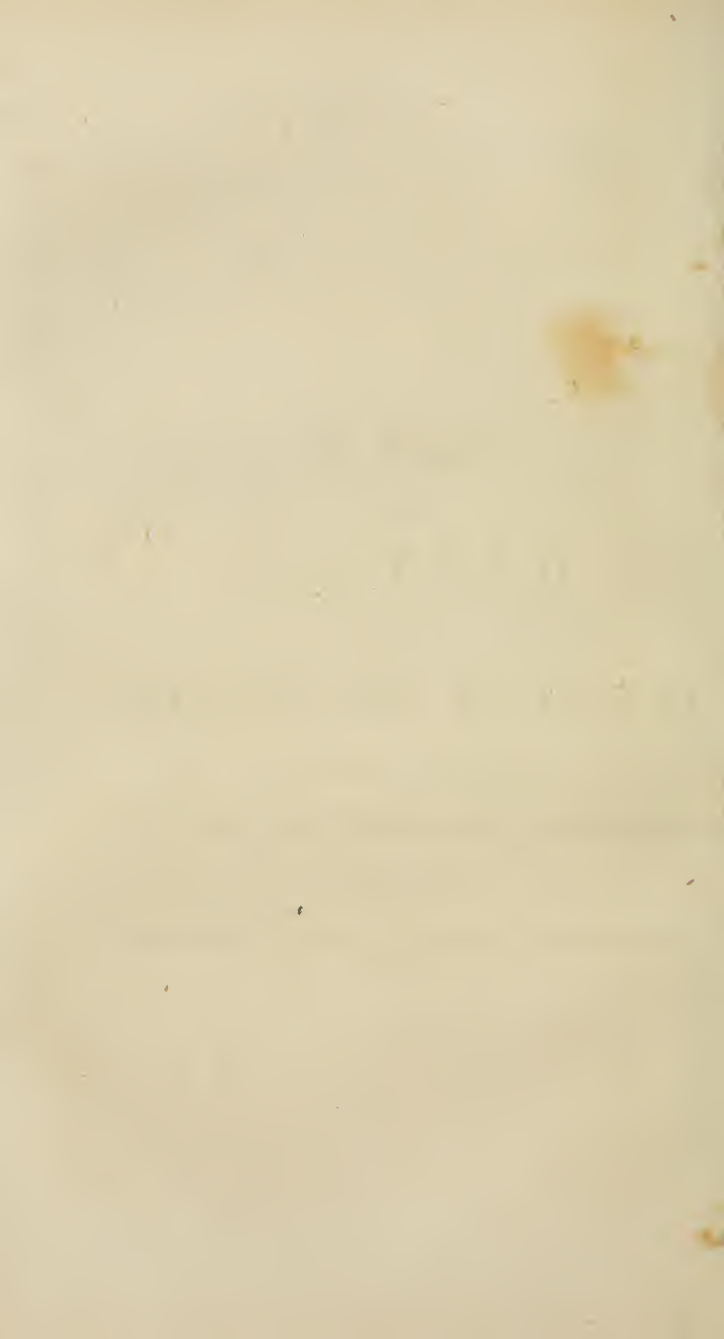
IMPORT OF THE COMMAND

AS INDICATED BY THE UNIFORM

MEANING OF THE GREEK TERM *BAPTIZO*

IN ITS USES BY

THE CLASSICAL, JEWISH, AND EARLY CHRISTIAN  
WRITERS.





## INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

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THE specific object of the discussion here presented is to illustrate the import of the Greek term *BAPTIZO* as applied in the New Testament to the rite of Christian profession, particularly as this is indicated in cases of its religious application; and thus, in connection with a general examination of the whole subject, directly to meet the positions commonly assumed by Pædobaptist writers on their own ground. Although the author has designed to omit no important consideration, embraced within the plan which he has adopted, which could add force to his argument, he has presented chiefly what is directly the result of his own investigations and reflections. A proper conception of some of the distinctions which he has noticed—and which will doubtless commend themselves to the mind of the reader as indisputable—he regards as essential to an examination of the subject in all respects satisfactory in its results. A disregard for these simple and obvious distinctions, has frequently led to the most illogical and erroneous conclusions. In the section relating to “ordinary Greek usage” with respect to *baptizo*, the reader’s attention is called particularly to the argument from the inevitable influence of this usage in fixing the sense of the term as used by the writers of the New Testament, and as understood by those whom they addressed. The facts pertaining to “Jewish usage” have been considered with reference not so much to the erroneous positions into the defence of which they are improperly pressed by Pædobaptist authors, as to their direct bearing on the point under discussion. Their real force as evidence that *baptizo* means “to immerse,” is usually lost in efforts to prove that there is nothing pertaining to them that is *inconsistent* with the idea of immersion; and in some instances extended arguments have been introduced to show that the sense, to immerse, is not *impossible*. Waiving the direct consideration of questions of this kind, the author has aimed to present these facts in their simple, positive bearings; and as the result it will be found, it is believed, that, while they expose the falsity of the positions for the support of which, from a limited view of their relations, they have improperly been claimed, they in reality afford direct and decisive proof that the im-

port of *baptizo* in its religious applications among the Jews, was simply and specifically, *to immerse*. For the passages adduced from the Greek Fathers illustrative of the import of *baptizo* in its direct "application to the rite of Christian baptism," the author has had recourse to the original works; and in most cases they are such as he has never seen adduced in a similar argument by any other author. It is obvious from the manner in which the subject has usually been treated, that the proof to be derived from this source has not been properly appreciated. The author, from the examination which he has been able to make, is confirmed in the impression that the advocates of "immersion" as the only proper import of *baptizo*, may fearlessly challenge the most extensive investigation into its use whether secular or religious; and that it will be found that the sense which it is obvious on a variety of separate and independent grounds, it possesses in the New Testament, is inseparable from it throughout the whole range of its usage whether by Pagan, Jewish, or Christian writers.

# BAPTISM,

IN THE

## IMPORT OF THE COMMAND.

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I.—PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.—*Baptizo* naturally designates a definite, external transaction—Is used in its customary signification—Its meaning is not to be confounded with the design of the rite.—II. ITS SIMPLE, CUSTOMARY IMPORT.—Testimony of the lexicons—Result of investigation into its usage—Examples of its use—Its use by the sacred writers—To whom their writings were addressed—Manner of expressing ideas peculiar to Judaism or Christianity—Illogical conclusions.—III. JEWISH USAGE.—Immersion the only sense indicated—No occasion for a change of meaning—Argument from the import of the Hebrew *tabal*—Influences tending to prevent a change of meaning—Examples of the use of the term—2 Kings 5: 14—Judith 12: 6—9—Eccl. 31: 30, 31—New Testament usage—Mark 7: 3, 4—Jewish practice of immersion—Testimony of the early Christian writers—Of the Rabbinical records—Immersion enjoined in Lev. 11: 32—Application of the facts to the argument—Heb. 9: 10—Argument from Jewish proselyte “immersion.”—IV. USE OF THE TERM IN ITS APPLICATION TO CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.—Usage of the Greek fathers—Technical use of the word—As denoting a transaction—As applied to the baptism of fire—As denoting immersion in distinction from emersion—Examples of its use from Chrysostom, Gregory Nazianzen, Basil, Cyril—Its construction with prepositions—Concluding statement of the nature of the argument—Note—Remarks upon the definitions of the term in the lexicons.

THE prominence given in the New Testament to Baptism, as the appointed rite of Christian profession, entitles the question, What is the import of the command enjoining it? to the most attentive consideration. This, like every similar question relating to the requirements of the gospel, must be decided by the meaning of the terms in

which the command is given. Our first inquiry, therefore, in an examination of the nature of Christian baptism, naturally is, What is the meaning of the Greek term BAPTIZO (to baptize) employed by our Lord in instituting the rite? As preparatory to the presentation of direct philological proof upon this point, we invite attention to two or three

#### PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

While the import of the term must be determined from its actual usage as a part of the Greek language, it may assist us in our investigation, and prepare the way for appreciating more fully the real force of the evidence as it shall be adduced, to inquire, what we should naturally be led to expect with regard to its use, from the general and admitted characteristics of the rite which it designates. Recognizing, then, the fact, universally conceded, that Christian baptism is an external, symbolical rite, we observe,

1. We should naturally expect that our Lord in instituting such a rite, would employ language descriptive of a DEFINITE, EXTERNAL TRANSACTION. Indeed, it was essential to its institution, that an external transaction of some kind should be designated. The suggestion that *baptizo* as used in the New Testament, "denotes merely an effect," whether that effect be regarded as a profession, a consecration, an initiation, a regeneration, or a *purification*—is effectually opposed by the very nature of the requirement. An "effect" is not a transaction, a ceremony, a symbolical rite; nor does a term expressing simply the former, so much as involve in its proper import an allusion to the latter. Had our Lord, instead of instituting the ordinance of the Supper, directed his disciples merely to hold communion with him, or with each other, in commemorating his death, a command, indeed, would have been given, but no rite would have been instituted. Nor could a rite of Christian profession have been instituted and defined, by the use of a

term by which no such rite was in reality described, but "merely an effect" indicated.

Nor does it accord with the ideas which we naturally form of a symbolical rite, to suppose that the question as to what transaction should be performed, would be left undecided. The idea of *ritual purification*, for example--an idea which is in reality irreconcilable with the very nature of a gospel ordinance, had always, among both Jews and Gentiles, been identified with the conception, *not of one*, but of a variety of different rites. The same is true of the *use of water* for ritual purposes. The idea that all forms of purification, or all modes of using water, constitute but one rite, was never, we presume, suggested to any mind, except in connection with the baptismal controversy. It is inconsistent with what we habitually and naturally conceive as pertaining to the nature and fitness of things.

Nor would the difficulty be essentially relieved by assuming that *baptizo* may be used in the generic sense, *to wash*, as being applicable alike to the hands, the feet, the head, or the whole body. This sense, although excluding all those forms of mere sprinkling or wetting, now used as baptism, in which no washing in any admissible sense of the term, is involved, would, nevertheless, fail of designating any definite transaction to be observed. A form of religious purification practised among the Jews, and occasionally as a strictly symbolical act indicative of moral purity—see Deut. 21: 6-8; Ps. 73: 13; Matt. 27: 24—consisted in *washing the hands*. Shall we conclude, then, that this—performed in the manner indicated 2 Kings 3: 11, or by any other convenient method—was, not less than any other form of washing, the rite instituted by our Lord as baptism, and intended by him to be observed as a means of Christian profession? It is evident, no form of religious washing would be more likely to be indicated by a term meaning simply *to wash* irrespectively of mode, than that

which was most prevalent among the Jews. And yet there are few, we imagine, who really believe that the washing of the hands was observed as baptism by the primitive Christians, or that they understood that it was in any way indicated in the command *to be baptized*. The conviction with most minds, we doubt not, is irrepressible, that they regarded some *other transaction* as being really designated; and this other transaction—necessarily more restricted, more definite, than a simple washing—was, of course, what they understood the word *baptizo* as properly indicating; and the sense in which it was understood by Christ and his apostles, is obviously to be the rule of duty for his people in every age. The exigency of the case seems clearly to demand that the word should direct attention to some well defined, specific, external rite to be performed, as immersion; and we cannot easily divest ourselves of the impression that this demand is actually met in its proper import.

2. We should naturally expect that the word *baptizo*, in its application to Christian baptism, would be used IN ITS SIMPLE, CUSTOMARY SIGNIFICATION. The thing enjoined, is what the word in the appointment of an external transaction to be observed as a rite of Christian profession, most naturally and directly expresses. It is decided without hesitation that the transaction required in the observance of the Lord's Supper, is to "*break bread,*" to "*eat,*" to "*drink,*" and to "*do*" (not, as the Romanists claim, "*to offer*") this in remembrance of Christ, on the ground that such is the simple, customary meaning of the terms employed in instituting it: and it is equally obvious, that if the proper, distinctive import of *baptizo* is *to immerse*, immersion must be the transaction designated by it in its application to the rite of Christian profession. The mind is necessarily directed to some transaction to be performed; and this transaction must be such as the word in its simple import indi-



cates. Had it been employed in any other acceptance, the very object had in view by its use, would have been defeated.

3. There is AN OBVIOUS DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE MEANING OF THE WORD BAPTIZO, AND THE DESIGN OF THE RITE WHICH IT DESIGNATES. The phrase rendered in Acts 2: 42; 20: 7, "*the breaking of bread,*" while it designates a transaction designed to be observed in remembrance of Christ, does not express this design in its simple meaning. Although, from the application which it has received, it directs the mind to a religious, commemorative rite, it properly *means* "*the breaking of bread,*" and it is *because* this is its meaning, that it is used to describe and designate the rite. Compare Matt. 26: 26. The vague impression which many seem to cherish, that the simple, characteristic meaning of *baptizo* must in some way have become changed or lost in consequence of its appropriation to the rite of Christian baptism, involves in reality the absurdity of assuming that it loses *in* the command the meaning which was attached to it in issuing the command! It surely will not be contended that it expressed any idea pertaining especially to the rite as such, before the rite was instituted. And the sense in which it was used in the appointment of the rite, must necessarily be its import as denoting the act to be performed in the observance of the rite. It properly designates some external transaction. This transaction is to be observed in the name of Christ, in profession of faith in him, and of conformity to his death and resurrection; and it is its design as thus explained, which invests it with its distinctive character as a Christian rite. The "*breaking of bread,*" is no less such because performed as a religious act; nor is immersion in water any the less immersion when so observed as to become Christian *baptism*.

With these preliminary observations, we proceed to inquire directly, What is the meaning of the word BAPTIZO, employed by our Lord in instituting the rite of Christian



profession, as evinced by its established usage? The position that its proper import in the case is TO IMMERSE, can be established, we believe—and that too, on a variety of distinct and independent grounds—beyond the possibility of a rational doubt. And we naturally appeal, first of all, to

ITS SIMPLE, CUSTOMARY SIGNIFICATION.

That this is properly expressed by the terms, *to immerse*, *to dip*, *to submerge*, is sufficiently proved by reference to any standard lexicon of the Greek language.\* Brechtsneider, whose authority as a critical lexicographer of the New Testament is unsurpassed, says, “An entire immersion belongs to the nature of baptism.” “*This is the meaning of the word.*” Indeed, since the thorough investigations into its use made by Carson, Stuart, and others, it may be regarded as a point universally conceded, that its simple import as a constituent part of the Greek language, is to immerse. Prof. Stuart, after an extensive examination of its use by the Greeks, was unable to find so much as a *single example* in which he even claims for it any such sense as to sprinkle, to purify, or to wash; and even in the only passage in which he prefers to render it simply to *bathe*, he admits that it is capable of being translated in accordance with its usual import—a case in which it has been clearly shown by his reviewers, nothing short of the sense to dip or immerse, will in reality meet the exigency of the passage.†

Two or three examples of its use by ancient Greek writers will enable the reader to judge for himself of its proper import.

Strabo, a cotemporary of the apostles, describing the peculiar properties of the water of a lake in Sicily, says, “Things that elsewhere will not float, do not become BAPTIZED (immersed) in the waters of this lake, but *swim* like wood.”

\* See Note—Appendix.

† See Prof. Ripley’s Examination, page 13.

Josephus, the Jewish historian, speaking of the drowning of Aristobulus by the instigation of Herod, says that they kept "pressing him down as he was swimming, and BAPTIZING (immersing) him as if in sport," until he was drowned. Again, describing an engagement between the Jews and the Romans on the lake of Gennesareth, he says that the former, "when they ventured to come near the Romans, were BAPTIZED together with their ships;" and adds, "if any of those who had been BAPTIZED raised their heads out of the water, they were either killed by the darts, or caught by the vessels."

These examples—which are only specimens of the customary use of the word—cannot fail to convince every mind that it properly expresses a definite, specific act; and that this act is *immersion*. That the writers of the New Testament were ignorant of this fact, will not, we presume, be pretended. And had they wished to denote simply some indefinite form of mere washing or purification, it is incredible that they should have employed for this purpose a term, which, as commonly used, was universally understood as indicating the definite act, immersion. Even on supposition that the word had acquired a secondary sense among the Jews—of which, however, there is not, as will appear upon examination, the slightest proof—it surely will not be denied, that the idea of *immersion in water* for a variety of purposes, and especially for ceremonial cleansing, was one with which they were familiar; and, as *baptizo* was understood, according to its literal import, to denote immersion, it follows that a mode of expression exactly suited to represent this idea, would have been the identical one used in Matt. 3: 6, 11, and Mark 1: 5, 8, in reference to *the baptism of the New Testament* at the time of its introduction. And is it to be believed that it was selected for the purpose of indicating that *not an immersion*, but merely a washing, or wetting, or purifying, was the thing involved in the rite?

But, in addition to this consideration, it is worthy of notice, that it was designed that the meaning of the word should be understood equally by those to whom, it is admitted, the peculiar sense claimed for it in the New Testament was unknown. From its entire usage by pagan Greeks, a single example is not adduced, in which it is supposed to exhibit this meaning. Indeed, it seems to be generally conceded, that no such sense belonged to the word in ordinary Greek usage. Hence the attempt to establish it on the ground of a peculiar, though imaginary "Jewish usage." It is involved, of course, that by the mass of those using the Greek language, and on whom the command to be baptized was enjoined by the primitive teachers of Christianity, a requisition to be wet, or washed, or purified, in the use of the word *baptizo*, would naturally and inevitably have been misunderstood. To their minds it would have conveyed no other idea than one in which *immersion* was involved. With them, it would have been precisely as if a similar command were now to be issued in the use of the English word *immerse*. And is it conceivable that our Lord should have sent forth his disciples among the various Gentile nations using the Greek language in the Roman empire, with the proclamation that they should "repent," and in his name "*be baptized*," while yet nothing like *baptism*, in the only sense in which they had been accustomed to use the term, or in which it could convey any definite idea to their minds, was required or indicated?

It avails nothing to urge in defence of a position so manifestly incredible, the appearance of Jewish idioms and Jewish ideas in the language of the New Testament. Nothing from this source has ever been adduced in illustration of the singular position assumed with regard to the import of *baptizo*, which has the slightest claim to be regarded as a parallel or analogous case; while in most instances, the examples urged, are of a nature to lead, when their true

bearing is perceived, to a conclusion *directly the opposite*. The gospel, as we have intimated, was preached by its primitive teachers to all nations who used the Greek language, Gentiles as well as Jews; and most of their writings embraced in the books of the New Testament, were originally addressed and sent to the former no less than to the latter. They would, of course, naturally seek to express the distinctive precepts of Christianity by such terms as were best adapted to convey to the minds of those whom they thus addressed, an idea of their real nature. This is the only principle on which their language can be satisfactorily interpreted. Nor do we believe that an instance can be adduced, in which, with reference to terms of established meaning in ordinary Greek usage, and by which the specific requirements of the gospel are usually expressed, this principle is violated. It is adhered to even in the expression of ideas that were peculiar to the Jewish religion or to the doctrines and principles of Christianity. In such cases, Greek terms, although necessarily receiving a new application, were selected, not—as is strangely assumed with respect to *baptizo*—without regard to their proper, customary signification, but *with direct reference to it*. They had in their ordinary use, as constituent parts of the Greek language, a definite, well-established meaning, a meaning that was generally recognized and understood; and it was *for this reason* that they were selected by the sacred writers, and applied to the ideas which were peculiar to the religion of the Bible. Dr. Robinson, in the introduction to his lexicon of the New Testament, alluding to the peculiarity of import observable in the use of words by the writers of the New Testament, observes, “An example of this is especially the word *πιστις* (faith).” Now it is perfectly obvious that this word was employed by them, not in disregard of its ordinary import, but *because* this was its meaning, and one that was universally acknowledged and understood. Indeed,

what more suitable term could possibly have been selected to convey to the mind the idea of *faith* as directed towards Christ, than one, the proper, established import of which was, faith, belief, confidence, trust? The same remarks will apply equally to the other terms cited by Dr. Robinson, and usually rendered, *righteousness, to justify, election, apostle*.

It is not in fact true of *baptizo*, as has been claimed for *δικαίω* (to justify), *ταπεινός* (humble), etc., that, as compared with its ordinary use, it is employed in some peculiar or merely similar acceptance, since being expressive of an external act, that act is the same whether performed for secular or religious purposes. Although possessing an additional technical force, it, like many other technical terms, retains without modification the whole of its simple, customary import:—yet even were we to assign it the place which is claimed for it, it would avail nothing toward setting aside the sense in which it was understood in ordinary Greek usage. All analogy would still require us to take it in some acceptance involving the general idea of *immersion*.

Nothing tends more directly to produce confusion in the minds of inquirers on the subject of baptism, and to lead to illogical and erroneous conclusions, than the practice prevalent among controversialists of appealing, in illustration of the singular position assumed with regard to the import of *baptizo*, to peculiarities of “sacred usage,” without apparently considering the nature or ground of such peculiarity. It seems not to be perceived that the examples urged in illustration, are, not merely entirely irrelevant and inapposite, but of a nature peculiarly adapted to expose the positive and obvious falsity of the very position in defence of which they are adduced. The only logical conclusion from the use of terms expressive of such ideas as faith, repentance, love, humility, meekness, &c., selected with direct and special reference to a meaning that was acknowledged and universally understood, is, *not*—as many Pædobaptist



writers strangely infer—that *baptizo* may be used in the New Testament without allusion to its proper import in ordinary Greek usage, but that in this respect it would follow *the analogy of the terms with which it is compared*; especially as it is used, not like these terms to denote duties which would be obligatory even without an express enactment, but to designate a *positive institution* in respect to which the will of the Master can be learned only from what is definitely expressed and enjoined in the terms employed in instituting it. We regard it as absolutely incredible—and our conviction, we doubt not, will be sustained by that of the reader—that the apostles and primitive evangelists should have gone forth calling the attention of all to whom they preached the gospel, wherever the Greek language was used, to an external rite or transaction, in the observance of which upon becoming disciples of Christ they were to profess their discipleship, and that in describing this transaction, they should continually have employed a term, which—as is universally admitted with regard to the mass of those to whom the command was addressed—was understood as denoting properly and simply the *act of immersion*, while in reality nothing like immersion as expressed or involved was intended. It would have been, as will be seen at a glance, precisely as if one in attempting to express in the English language the idea of *washing*, or *wetting*, or *purifying*, or any other idea involving no allusion to mode, should select for this purpose the word *immerse*!

Having thus shown on the ground of the simple, customary signification of the term *baptizo*, that it is impossible, in accordance with any acknowledged or admissible principles of interpretation, that its meaning in the New Testament should be any thing else than immersion, we proceed to establish the same position on the ground of the customary and uniform JEWISH USAGE.



## JEWISH USAGE.

Not only is the assumption respecting the existence of a secondary sense of the word as used by the Jews, without the slightest foundation, but there is positive proof, perfectly decisive, that in all its variety of usage among them, it retained without change its original, proper signification, *to immerse*. Before proceeding, however, to adduce this proof from examples of its actual use by Jewish authors, we call attention to two or three considerations adapted to show that any such change of meaning as is claimed, would have been contrary to all analogy and probability.

1. There was apparently no occasion for it. There was nothing in the usages of the Jews, in respect either to their language or their customs, that could naturally lead to it. In representing in the Greek language ideas expressed by Hebrew or Aramæan terms, there was not the slightest occasion for using *baptizo* in any other than its proper, modal sense, *to immerse*. To have employed it, in disregard of a multitude of terms really suited to the purpose, to express the idea of sprinkling, or wetting, or ablution, or purification without respect of mode, would have been, we venture to assert, an anomaly in the history of language.

2. It is worthy of notice that the corresponding Hebrew term *tabal* (to dip, to immerse) although applied for a great variety of purposes to religious rites, including those of ablution and washing, retained unchanged through every period of Jewish literature, its distinctive, modal sense, *to immerse*. This use of the term, uniformly appearing in the Old Testament, was continued in the Jewish schools after the Hebrew ceased to be the language of common life, and appears in all its distinctness in the Talmuds and other Rabbinical writings. The proof of this fact presented by Drs. Lightfoot and Gill in their commentaries on the New Testament, is perfectly decisive. *Tabal* is continually used, not only in cases where immersion for religious purposes is

directly designated, but as the appropriate term for *distinguishing* an immersion for the purification either of the body or of utensils, from a simple washing.

Such being the usage with regard to the Hebrew term, we should naturally expect to find the same existing with respect to the Greek *baptizo*, with which it originally corresponded in import. What possible reason can be assigned why, while the Hebrew word retained its distinctive meaning unchanged, the corresponding term in Greek, originally applied to the same transactions, and used for the same purposes, should entirely depart from it? It can hardly admit of a doubt that the two terms were, each in its own language, freely and familiarly used by the Jewish doctors at the time of our Lord's ministry, as representatives of the same idea. And as the one beyond all question signified to immerse, this would, of course, be regarded as the meaning of the other.

3. The facts—and, as far as we are aware, the only facts pertaining to Jewish usage—on the ground of which an attempt is made to account for a change of meaning in the word, are in reality of a nature to have apparently rendered it impossible. It is admitted that the term first became applied to certain Jewish observances in its original, proper signification, to immerse, and for the purpose, of course, of designating them *as immersions*, and thus distinguishing them from other forms of purification in general, as sprinkling, anointing, &c., as well as from other modes of washing, as in the ordinary washing of the hands—all designated by separate and appropriate terms:—and yet it is assumed that *while being used to mark this distinction*, it acquired the generic sense, to purify, to wet, or to wash, in which all reference to such distinction was lost, and it could be applied equally to any act of wetting, or washing, or purification irrespectively of mode! It is needless to add that this method of accounting for the change of meaning claimed,

carries with it, when fairly stated so that the bearing of its several positions upon each other may be perceived, its own refutation. We venture to assert, that under similar circumstances a change of signification, like the one thus claimed for *baptizo*, was never known with regard to any word. Nor can we conceive that it would be possible. The position conflicts with the fundamental laws which operate in the formation and usage of language. The very ambiguity and confusion which would have resulted from the use of the word in the sense, to purify, to wet, or to wash, were sufficient to prevent it from acquiring that sense; for as used to designate the ritual immersions to which it first became applied, it could not possibly have been known, in a thousand supposable cases, what was its meaning. The same influences which operated in fixing the meaning of the Hebrew *tabal*, apparently beyond the possibility of a change in which all allusion to mode should disappear, would naturally operate with equal force with respect to the Greek word *baptizo*. It might as easily be conceived that the words *dip*, *pour*, and *sprinkle*, or their corresponding terms in Hebrew, used in Lev. 9 : 5-12 for the purpose of designating the three specific acts of dipping, pouring, and sprinkling, might acquire from this use of them a new signification in which all reference to mode should be lost!

The conclusion to which we are thus brought from a consideration simply of what the very nature of the case obviously requires, is fully sustained by an examination of the examples in which the word appears in actual use.

The first instance of its use by a Jewish writer is in 2 KINGS 5 : 14; where it occurs as a translation of the Hebrew *tabal*, "And Naaman went down and *immersed* himself seven times in the Jordan." Its meaning in this case is determined by the established import of the Hebrew word of which it is a direct translation, and which, as we have noticed, retained unchanged its meaning through every

period of Jewish literature. It is useless to suggest that the sacred historian might have said without impropriety that Naaman *washed* or *bathed* himself seven times. For, independently of the most direct and obvious reply to such a suggestion, it will not be denied that it is equally natural, to say the least, that he has used the language actually occurring in the passage, indicative of the fact that he *immersed* himself. Indeed, the manner in which *rahats, to wash, to bathe*, is used in verse 10, clearly indicates that the Jews were accustomed to employ even this term to denote *separate and specific acts* involved in bathing;—a fact which shows that they may have attached to the requisition to “bathe themselves,” so frequently repeated in the Mosaic ritual, a more specific meaning than many commentators have been disposed to recognize. That these specific acts should be designated in verse 14 by their appropriate name, is precisely what might have been anticipated. The prophet wishing to indicate an allusion to the effect to be experienced, directs the leper to *wash* or *lave* himself seven times in the Jordan. That the latter, in obeying the direction, went down into the river and *immersed* himself seven times in its waters, we should naturally have inferred, even had it not been expressly stated. And that the sacred historian should record the transaction as it actually occurred, accords with all analogy in similar cases. It thus appears that, not only is the import of *baptizo* in 2 Kings 5 : 14 determined on the ground of the established and uniform signification of *tabal*, of which it is a direct translation, but that no sense so well as immersion meets the very exigencies of the passage.

By the Jew, comparing the Greek language with the Hebrew, *baptizo* from the use of it in this passage, would naturally be regarded, when applied to acts of washing or cleansing equally as in other connections, as being equivalent to the Hebrew *tabal*; and as the latter was used to denote the specific act, *immersion*, this would, of course, be recognized

as the import of the former; and the two terms would thus necessarily become associated in his mind as expressing the same idea.

Another passage in which the word occurs in Jewish usage, being employed to denote a ceremony of strictly religious ablution, is found in the apocryphal book of JUDITH, chap. 12 : 6—9. “And she sent to Holofernes, saying, Let my lord now direct that thy handmaid may go forth to prayer. Then Holofernes commanded his guard that they should not restrain her. So she abode in the camp three days, and went out by night into the valley of Bethulia, and *baptized* herself at the fountain of water within the camp; and when she had come up, she prayed to the Lord God of Israel that he would direct her way to the raising up of the children of his people. And she came in clean, and remained in the tent until she partook of her food at evening.”

The order and connection of the events as here narrated, will be observed. Judith, in company with her female attendant, comp. chap. 13 : 10, goes out under the covert of the night and by special permission from Holofernes, into the valley of Bethulia for the purpose of prayer; arriving at the fountain of water in the valley she *baptizes* herself; she then *comes up*, engages in prayer, and returns to her tent. The clause especially deserving notice—and one which seems to have been strangely overlooked in all the criticisms on the passage which have come under our observation—is *ὡς ἀνέβη* when she had come up. This clearly implies, not only that in her baptism there was in reality a *descent*, but that there is an intimation of this fact in the preceding statement. We look in vain, however, for any such intimation except as it is contained in the *import* of the word *baptizo*. The declaration that she “baptized,” i. e., “*immersed*” herself, involves, of course, the implication that she descended into the water, and thus prepares the way for the remark,



“and when she had come up, she prayed.” Nor will any thing short of this meet the exigency of the passage. Allusion to a mere wetting, or washing, or purifying, irrespective of mode, performed at a fountain of water, would in no way involve a reference to a *descent* and an *ascent* as connected with it.

This passage, therefore, so far from containing the slightest intimation that the word *baptizo* had acquired among the Jews any other sense than that of immersion, presents in reality a positive and interesting proof that this was its meaning as used by them, to designate acts of religious ablu- tion. And this, of course, is decisive as to the sense which they attached to it in all cases of application to ritual observances.

Another instance of its use by a Jewish author in refer- ence to religious rites, occurs in Eccl. 31 : 30, 31. “He who *baptizeth* himself after having touched a dead body, and toucheth it again, in what respect is he benefited by his *bath* (loutron)? So is it with the man who fasteth for his sins, and goeth again and doeth the same things, Who will hear his prayer? or in what respect is he benefited by his humiliation?” Here, as fasting is represented as a *mode* of humiliation, so it may be inferred that *baptism* is referred to as the usual *mode* of bathing, and this, as is well known, was *immersion*. Any question which may arise respecting the construction of the passage, is sufficiently met by a refer- ence to Heb. 10 : 25, exhibiting a familiar mode of ex- pression entirely parallel, and which is obviously to be ac- counted for on the same principle. That there is an ellipsis in the Greek expression, is universally admitted. That which was removed, was not the dead body, but the pollu- tion contracted by touching it; and this, it will not be de- nied, could as well be removed by immersion, as by any other mode of washing. Allusion to the act usually per- formed in such cases, would at once suggest to the mind of



one acquainted with Jewish usages, an idea of the object sought; and to this idea, the construction, in the same manner as in Heb. 10 : 25, naturally becomes conformed.

But while the sense, *to immerse*, is one which thus entirely meets the exigency of the passage, it is worthy of notice, that any sense that does not involve a reference to some act of *bathing*, is positively excluded. That *loutron* is the appropriate, distinctive term for designating specifically, a *bath*, or *bathing*, will not be denied by any one familiar with Greek usage. And it is deserving attention, that whatever other ceremonies were observed in the case of one who had touched a dead body, the only transaction—that by which the purification was completed—to which the passage represents the “baptism” as referring, was *the bathing*. The position, therefore, is fully established, that *a bathing* (*loutron*) *is involved in the act of a ritual baptism*. All idea of mere wetting, or purifying, or washing, in the generic sense, claimed as the meaning of *baptizo* in the New Testament, is consequently shown to be utterly inadmissible. And as the baptism is evidently referred to as the usual *mode* of bathing, there is every reason to believe, from the exigency of the passage itself, that the word is used in its customary, characteristic sense, *to immerse*.

We have now called attention to all the passages supposed to have a bearing on the point under examination, in which *baptizo* is used by Jewish writers previously to the introduction of Christian baptism, and it will be seen, that not only is there nothing pertaining to them, to awaken a suspicion that the term was ever employed by the Jews in any other than its simple, customary sense, to immerse, but they afford positive proof of the most interesting and decisive character, that this was the sense which they attached to it, in its religious, as well as secular applications. This, consequently, corresponding as it does with its ordinary import,

must have been the sense in which it was used by Christ and his apostles.

The correctness of this conclusion will become, if possible, still more apparent, from an examination of the passages in which the term is *applied to Jewish rites in the New Testament*.

The first instance of its use as so applied, occurs in MARK 7: 3, 4—"For the Pharisees and all the Jews, except they wash their hands carefully, eat not; holding the tradition of the elders; and when they come from the market, except they *baptize* themselves, they eat not." It will be seen at a glance, that the word *baptize*, as used in this passage, denotes something more than the simple washing of the hands, and hence cannot have the generic sense, *to wash*. It designates some more special and thorough ablution than the one indicated in the preceding verse by the term *nipto*, performed by the Jews on all occasions before taking their meals. And it is definitely stated in the Jewish Talmuds, and other Rabbinical writings, claiming to be a record of "the traditions of the elders" prevalent at the time of our Lord's ministry, that this more thorough ablution was an *immersion*.

That it was the custom of the Jews on a great variety of occasions to *bathe* themselves for the purpose of ceremonial cleansing, is abundantly attested by both Jewish and Christian writers of the first and second centuries, and whose personal knowledge of Jewish usages at that period, places their testimony beyond all suspicion. Tertullian, alluding to the observance of Jewish rites, says of the Jew, "he *bathes daily*, because he is daily defiled." That these "daily bathings" were ordinarily performed by immersing the body in water, might be inferred from the well-known fact, that this was the usual mode of bathing practised by the ancients. Justin Martyr, in fact, familiarly alludes to the Jewish

practice as a going "*into the bath.*" He describes the Jewish baptism as being merely "a baptism of cisterns," which although they might serve to the bathing of the body, were entirely void of any thing that could avail to the benefit of the soul. All ground for dispute, moreover, is removed by the direct testimony of the Jewish Talmuds, in which it is declared in reference to the various *bathings* prescribed by the Jewish ritual, "Nothing of the kind can take place without an *immersion* of the body." And Maimonides, speaking of the Pharisees, says, "if they had so much as touched the garments of the common people, they were defiled, and needed *immersion.*"

But the record of Jewish traditions respecting the immersion of the body, is not more explicit, than with respect to the *immersion of utensils*; corresponding exactly with what is stated in Mark 7: 4—"And there are many other things which they have received to hold, as *baptisms* (baptismous) [i. e. immersions] of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels, and couches κλιῶν." It was enjoined that their articles of furniture, such as "cups," "pots," "kettles," &c., should in all cases be prepared for use by *immersing* them in water. This was the usual method prescribed for cleansing them, when from any cause they had contracted ceremonial defilement. And among the articles enumerated, "couches" or beds are especially noticed; and particular directions are given respecting the manner in which the immersion might be performed. "A bed that is wholly defiled, if one *immerses* it *part by part*, it is clean."

It is customary with commentators, in illustration of passages in the New Testament which refer to Jewish customs and traditions, to appeal freely to the testimony of the Rabbinical records. It is very properly urged, that while it did not, in many cases, accord with the object proposed by contemporary writers to give a particular account of these things, the fact that they are recorded with minuteness by

the later Rabbins, may be received—especially if there be nothing in their general character to lead to the supposition that they originated at a period subsequent to the dispersion of the Jews by the Romans—as an interesting corroboration of the evangelical history. The applicability of this position to the statement respecting the “tradition of the elders,” in Mark 7 : 3, 4, is, as far as it relates to the existence of certain customs of ceremonial cleansing, generally admitted without hesitation. And yet by most writers it seems not to be appreciated, that the records which testify to the *existence* of these customs, are in reality descriptions of their *character*. It is from what is stated respecting the “*immersion*” of “cups,” and “pots,” and “couches,” that we learn that they were cleansed; we arrive at the conclusion that they were washed, because we are informed that they were “*immersed*.” The consideration that there is no reason to suspect that these customs originated at a period later than that of the New Testament, is no less applicable to them as immersions than as purifications. What possible reason can be suggested, why the traditions of the elders so frequently referred to by our Lord, should not have required as much in this respect, as those prevalent at any subsequent period? Indeed since the dispersion of the Jews by the Romans there has been a constant tendency on their part, arising from the inconveniences attending their scattered and distracted state, to recede in the observance of their religious ceremonies from the rigorous exactness prescribed in the Jewish “traditions,” so that they have, one after another, ceased to be observed.

We now ask the reader to compare the representation of these Jewish records with that of the New Testament. In the former the thing required on occasions similar to those specified in Mark 7 : 4, and Luke 11 : 38, is designated an “*immersion*.” In the latter it is stated that a “*baptism*” was performed. In the former, in passages which treat of

the usual mode by which utensils were prepared for use or cleansed from defilement, directions are given respecting the *immersion* of "cups" and "pots" and "brazen vessels" and "couches." In the latter, Mark 7 : 4, it is stated that "the tradition of the elders" required the *baptism* of these articles. Can it be doubted that the terms applied in this manner to what was obviously the same transaction, were considered synonymous? Why should a transaction be commonly and familiarly designated an "immersion" in one language, and not a term of the same characteristic import be employed to designate it in another? And when so employed, as in the use of *baptismos* (baptism) in Mark 7 : 4, is it possible to resist the conviction that it is used for the purpose of designating it *as an immersion*?

But, independently of these facts, there was an obvious reason in the very nature of the case, for designating the act of "putting into water" enjoined in Lev. 11 : 32,—and performed in accordance with "the traditions of the elders" on many occasions not specified in the Jewish ritual,—an "immersion." It was not an ordinary washing; it was not performed for the sake of washing, in the usual acceptance of that term. It was simply a "putting into water," an *immersion*, for a ceremonial purpose. And it was suitable that it should be designated by its appropriate name. The same remark will apply with equal force to the ceremonial ablution of the body commonly practised. It was not a simple bathing. It was performed for none of the ordinary purposes of bathing. It was neither more nor less than a simple *immersion* of the body in water, which, although involving a washing or bathing, was observed in compliance with a ceremonial requisition. And nothing could be more natural than that it should receive a distinctive appellation descriptive of the simple, specific act performed. And as it is to these ceremonial observances that reference is had in Mark 7 : 4, they are, as we should naturally expect to find them, designated "immersions" (baptisms).



These suggestions will assist us in understanding the import of HEB. 9 : 10, in which allusion is had to the attention given by the Jews, in their observance of the law, to "meats and drinks and divers *baptisms* βαπτισμοῖς." The class of ritual observances thus designated are, according to the only natural construction of the original text, adopted and sustained by the ablest critics, expressly *distinguished* from those involved in "the offering of gifts and sacrifices," including the various *sacrificial purifications*. And it is a fact which seems not to have been sufficiently regarded in any of the criticisms on the passage which have come under our observation, that aside from those ceremonies which were observed in connection with the offering of sacrifices or were sacrificial in their nature, the only cases in which the use of water was enjoined by the Mosaic ritual, were those in which an *immersion* is either described, as in Lev. 11 : 32, or was according to the Jewish traditions requisite to a fulfilling of the command. The apostle accordingly, upon having occasion to refer to this general class of observances, naturally designates them "immersions" (baptisms). They were not simply and specifically *bathings* (loutra) ; for in addition to the fact that they had respect to utensils as well as persons, they were in no case performed for any of the ordinary purposes of bathing. They were merely ceremonial *acts*, acts of *immersion* in water for ceremonial purposes ; and hence their most appropriate designation was "*immersions*." They are continually so designated by the Jewish Rabbins ; and the apostle writing in Greek naturally employs a term (*baptismos*) of the same import.

It thus appears that the facts pertaining to the use of the terms *baptizo* and *baptismos* as applied to Jewish rites in the New Testament, lead to the same conclusion at which we arrived from an examination of passages in the Greek of the Old Testament and the Apocrypha. The only sense



which a proper regard for these facts will possibly admit of, is *immersion*. And this may be considered as decisive of the sense in which *baptizo* was used by Christ and his apostles in reference to the rite of Christian baptism.

Before dismissing the argument from Jewish usage, however, we call attention to the fact that the rite of initiation into the Jewish commonwealth commonly designated "baptism," was an *immersion*, and by a form of the Hebrew *tabal*, is continually *so designated* in the Jewish Talmuds, which reveal its existence. Whether the *baptism*, i. e., the "immersion" of proselytes was practised by the Jews previously to the introduction of the gospel, it is no part of our present object to determine. But it is worthy of notice that whatever connection between its observance, and the origin of Christian *baptism*, may be supposed to have existed, must have existed between "baptism," and a ceremony which was not only in reality an *immersion*, but was known by the distinctive appellation "immersion." And if it be true, as most Pædobaptist authors contend, that *the idea of baptism* as an initiatory rite, was familiar to the minds of the Jews at the time John commenced his ministry, it ought not to be overlooked that it was *the idea of immersion*, of a rite which being such in reality, was familiarly so designated; and the fact that the Christian rite is called in Greek *baptisma* (baptism), a term exactly adapted to designate it an "immersion," is proof that it is thus designated, the force of which it seems impossible for any mind open to conviction to resist.

But should the origin of Jewish proselyte "immersion" be assigned to a period somewhat later, the force of the argument for the import of *baptizo* derived from this source, would not be essentially diminished, as it is obvious that there was that in Jewish usage which would naturally lead those familiar with it, to understand terms meaning *to immerse*, applied to the rites of religion, according to their *literal* import. They were prepared to hear an initiatory rite,

like Christian *baptism*, familiarly called an *immersion*; and they would, of course, at once attach to the requisition to be "baptized," i. e.,—according to the simple, characteristic meaning of the term,—*immersed*, the idea which the word thus literally and properly expressed. And it is inconceivable that our Lord or his disciples should have selected the term to indicate the thing required in Christian *baptism*, for any purpose except to express this idea.

Having thus shown that all facts pertaining not only to the established import of the word *baptizo* in ordinary Greek usage, but also to its use as applied directly to Jewish rites, require us to assign to it as used in the New Testament, the sense *to immerse*, we proceed to establish the same position from its customary use in

#### ITS APPLICATION TO CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

That it was used by the early Christian writers who employed the Greek language, in the sense of immersion, in cases of direct allusion to the rite of baptism, is placed beyond all ground of dispute by reference to the examples in which it occurs. Nor have we, after a careful examination of all the passages which we have ever seen adduced as proof that in certain instances they employed it in a sense at variance with the idea of immersion, been able to discover a single example, which—when the *technical use* which as the appropriated name of the rite of Christian immersion it unavoidably acquired, is properly considered—is even apparently inconsistent with the position that they understood its proper meaning as being *to immerse*.

For an illustration of the "technical use" of *baptizo* and *baptisma* by the Christian Fathers, we refer the reader to the use of *rantismos*, *sprinkling*, in Heb. 12 : 24, and 1 Pet. 1 : 2,—“the blood of *sprinkling*,” “the *sprinkling* of the blood of Jesus Christ.” In this application of the term

*rantismos*, although nothing like sprinkling as an external act, is designated or described, there is direct allusion to the ceremony of sprinkling observed under the Jewish law, and with this the thing designated is *compared*; it is conceived of as answering a similar purpose; and on this ground it is, in accordance with a natural and familiar usage of language, figuratively or technically called by the same name. It is accordingly admitted without hesitation that the only terms by which the idea expressed can be truly represented in any language, are those which properly mean *to sprinkle*.

In accordance with a principle entirely similar, the word *baptisma* as the appropriated name of the rite of Christian immersion, was technically or figuratively applied, by the Christian Fathers, to various things which they regarded as answering a similar purpose, or as bearing a *resemblance* to baptism in some of its characteristics or relations. But, as in Heb. 12 : 24, and 1 Pet. 1 : 2 a distinction is to be observed between the transaction designated by *rantismos*, to wit, the application of Christ's atonement, and the *effect* of this transaction in cleansing the soul from the guilt and consciousness of sin, so in the use of *baptisma* by the Fathers, the *transaction* or *event* designated, is never to be confounded with the *effect* supposed to be produced, whether it be purification, remission, consecration, initiation, etc., or the opposite of these. The illogical and erroneous conclusions upon this point, which have been arrived at in interpreting the language of the Fathers, may, almost without exception, be traced directly to a disregard for this simple and obvious distinction; a distinction which is generally indicated in the very form of expression employed; and which, if not expressed, is, of course, in all cases implied. While in the usage of the Fathers, *baptisma* in its religious application was always used to denote some *transaction* or *occurrence*, the effects resulting therefrom, are described as being exceedingly various and in some instances directly opposite

in their nature. A striking illustration of this fact is furnished by a passage occurring in the works of John of Damascus, and relating expressly to the various religious applications of *baptisma* in the New Testament and among the Christians of his own day. While in one sentence, he describes a baptism that is purifying in its effects, in the next, he just as freely and familiarly speaks of one that is "not salutary," not purifying, but only "punitive;" the subjects are "baptized" indeed, "baptized in fire," but are not "saved," not purified, but on the contrary "punished forever;" a case in which all idea of purification, even as an effect produced on the baptized, is absolutely precluded. And the "baptism" is no more confounded with its effects in the one case, than in the other. Compare with this representation, the fact that in the Latin version of Origen's works, the import of *baptizo* occurring in a similar connection, in a passage designed to be explanatory of the declaration, "He shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and fire," is expressed by *mergo* (to immerse), the one being used interchangeably with the other.

No passages are more decisive in illustrating the sense attached to the word *baptizo* by the Christian Fathers, than those in which, in speaking of the rite of baptism, they employ it to designate definitely the act of *immersion* as contrasted with the *emersion* connected with it. While a requisition to be *immersed* in profession of faith in Christ implies an *emersion*, and while a *rite* requiring the one necessarily involves the other, it is obvious that the word *immersion* does not mean to *emerge*, but directly the opposite, to *immerse*; and the best of all possible proof that a term expressing such a requisition, signifies simply and specifically, to immerse, is its susceptibility of freely and familiarly marking this distinction. It is customary, for example, among certain Christian sects in this country, in speaking of the ordinance which they familiarly designate "immersion," to

represent the *immersion* and the *emersion* involved in it, as being significant, the one of death, the other of resurrection. And the use of the word "immersion" in such a connection, would be to the mind of a foreigner wishing to determine its meaning as applied to the rite, decisive proof that it properly denoted the simple, specific act of immersion. Proof of precisely the same kind, exists in great abundance, that immersion was the sense in which the Christian Fathers used the terms *baptizo* and *baptisma*, in their application to the rite of Christian baptism.

Chrysostom, commenting on Mark 10 : 39, represents our Lord as designating his "*descent into death*" as a "baptism;" as when one "in the use of water is *baptized* (immersed), and rises again." Again, in his Homily on John 3 : 5, he remarks, that, while on the one hand, baptism has reference to the death of Christ, as is expressed in the declaration, "We are buried with him *by baptism* into death," his death, on the other hand, or his sufferings unto death, are designated "baptism," as in the passages, "Are ye able to be *baptized* with the *baptism* that I am baptized with?" "I have a *baptism* to be *baptized with*:" and, in illustration, he adds, "For as it is easy to be *baptized* (immersed), and to *emerge*, so he, having died, easily rose when he wished."

It will be observed, that Chrysostom represents what, in the figurative application of the term, he denominates the "baptism" of Christ, as having the same relation to his resurrection, that "baptism" or immersion, in the literal acceptation of the word, has to emersion. As he who is "baptized" or immersed in water, also "emerges," so Christ emerged from his "baptism," i. e., his "descent into death," by his resurrection. And in these uses of the words *baptizo* and *baptisma*, whether literal or figurative, Chrysostom is illustrating their import in their *religious* application, both as understood by the Christians of his own day, and as used in the New Testament. The language of Mark 10 : 39, and



Luke 12 : 50, is introduced as involving direct allusion to the rite of baptism, while in Rom. 6 : 4, the rite is expressly designated. And it is in a passage embracing these several applications of the word *baptisma*, that it is familiarly used, as all will admit, to denote simply and specifically, *immersion*.

*Gregory Nazianzen*, in a formal statement of what was regarded in his time as the spiritual significance of various names by which the rite was designated, represents the import of *baptisma* (immersion) as having the same relation to the idea of *burial*, that the import of *loutron* (washing) has to the idea of washing away or cleansing.

Numerous passages occur in the works of *Basil*, placing it beyond all doubt, that the word *baptizo* in its religious application, was understood and employed by the Greek Fathers in the sense *to immerse*. From the treatises "on baptism" ascribed to him, we select the following: "We being baptized (immersed) into death in likeness *ἁποθνήσκειν* (of the death of Christ), should die to sin; and by our *rising* from the baptism (the immersion) being raised as from the dead, we should live to God." While an emersion is here regarded as inseparable from a baptism or immersion, and consequently as a part of the rite, it is not what the word "baptism" properly expresses. The meaning of this is simply *immersion*. That it is used in this sense in the passage quoted, is placed beyond all dispute by the expression, "and by our *rising* from the *baptism* being raised as from the dead." The use of the terms *baptizo* and *baptisma* in this case in which there is direct reference to the rite of Christian baptism, and in forms of expression actually borrowed from Rom. 6 : 3-5, is perfectly decisive as to the import attached to them by the Greek Fathers.

In another passage, one who is "*baptized* (immersed) in the Holy Spirit," and in that fire which is the source of spiritual light, the word or truth of God, is represented as being in a condition to be fully subjected to their influence,



and transformed to their nature, that is, to become enlightened and purified; “*just as wool baptized (immersed) in dye is changed in respect to its color,*” or “*as iron baptized (immersed) in fire excited by blowing, is rendered more susceptible of purification, and becomes not only luminous, but soft and flexible.* It will be observed that, as the act of baptizing or immersing the wool in dye, is distinguished from the *effect* produced in changing the color, and as the baptism of the iron,—which being *plunged* into the fire becomes *enveloped* or immersed in the flame excited by blowing,—is distinguished from the effect in changing the properties of the iron; so a becoming baptized or immersed in the Holy Spirit—most happily illustrated by the allusion to the iron enveloped in the flame—is carefully distinguished from the *effect* of this baptism in transforming, enlightening, purifying the soul.

The comparison between a literal and a figurative baptism or immersion, here introduced, is especially deserving notice. It shows clearly that the Greek Fathers did not consider that the technical use which the word *baptizo* had acquired, affected in the least its simple and proper *meaning*; but that, whether as applied to religious or secular transactions, its characteristic import was equally *to immerse*.

We next call attention to the use of the term by *Cyril of Jerusalem*. Speaking (Cat. 17) of the apostles as “baptized in the Holy Spirit” at the time of Pentecost, he says: “The gift was not in part; the influence was in full perfection. For as he who goes down *ενδύων* into the water, and is *baptized* (immersed), is encompassed on all sides by the waters; so were they completely baptized (immersed) by the Spirit. The water envelops externally; but the Spirit baptizes (immerses, envelops) also, and that perfectly, the soul within.” The meaning of the term in this passage, whether as applied to the rite of baptism, or the influences of the Spirit, cannot possibly be mistaken. The comparison

between literal baptism in which one goes down into the water, and is immersed, i. e. "baptized," and in the act becomes "encompassed on all sides by the waters," and the figurative application of the term in reference to the Holy Spirit, the use of the terms "encompassing" and "enveloping" in explanation of the figure, and the free interchange of these with *baptizo*, in fine, the whole representation, establish for the term, the sense to immerse, in a manner which must suffice to strike conviction to every mind.

In the same connection Cyril speaking of "the sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind" as indicating the presence of the Spirit, says: "'It filled all the house where they were sitting.' The house became the reservoir of the spiritual water; the disciples were sitting within; and the whole house was filled. They were, *therefore*, completely *baptized* (immersed) *according to the promise.*" The reader will mark the representation. The disciples were "baptized" because the "whole house" while they were "within" was "filled" with the spiritual water. And it is worthy of notice that this is the sense, not only in which Cyril employs the term in his own familiar use of it, but in which he declares it was used by our Lord in "the promise" which he had just quoted, "Ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence." Can there be a doubt as to the sense which the Greek Fathers attached to the word in the New Testament?

An argument equally conclusive may be derived from the use of the word by the Fathers in *its construction with prepositions*. Although, as an author may wish to direct attention particularly either to the simple act of immersion itself, or to the means by which it is effected, he may say with equal propriety, 'immersed *in* water, or *by means of* water, or *into* water,' it is obvious that all of these modes of construction are not adapted to any term that means merely to wash, or wet, or purify. The usual construction occurring

in the writings of the Fathers is "baptized *in water*, ἐν ὕδατι, occasionally εἰς ὕδωρ *into water*. And the familiar use of such an expression as "we are baptized into water," would seem to be sufficient in itself to settle the import of the term. It will hardly be claimed that they intended to say, 'washed, or wet, or purified *into water*.' 'Immersed into water' is the only admissible sense.\*

The facts here presented, drawn from various sources, and pertaining to the use of *baptizo* in various relations and particular applications, must suffice to set the question respecting its import as used by the Greek Fathers forever at rest. It must, we think, be perfectly obvious to every mind that the word as employed by them has precisely the same meaning as when used by other Greek authors; that it is used by them to denote the specific act of *immersion* in the same manner in which we employ the word *immerse*; that in this sense they apply it equally to religious and secular transactions, passing in this use of it freely from one to the other; and that the sense in which they themselves as Greek authors thus use the term, was the import which they attached to it as employed, both literally and figuratively, in the New Testament. Indeed it would be impossible for us to mention a philological fact that is better established than is the import of *baptizo* as thus stated, in the usage of the ancient Greek Fathers.

\* That the use of the prepositions *ἐκ* and *διὰ* with *baptizo* and *baptisma* in the sense *by means of*, does not create the slightest presumption against the idea of immersion, is sufficiently proved by a single passage from Chrysostom, in which he is speaking of the baptism of water as distinguished from a baptism by other means, and in which he uses the word *baptizo*, as all will admit, to denote the specific act of immersion: "He who is baptized (immersed) εἰς ὕδατος by means of (in the use of) water, emerges with great ease;" so Christ easily rose or emerged from his "baptism," i. e., his "descent into death."

Let the reader now call to mind the positions established in the foregoing discussion ;—that the term *baptizo* as applied to Christian baptism necessarily designates some external rite, or ceremony, or transaction to be performed ;—that the transaction which it properly denotes according to its characteristic, customary, *uniform* signification in ordinary Greek usage, is *immersion* ;—that this was the sense in which it was continually used by Jewish authors in their application of it to religious rites ;—and, finally, that the early Christians among whom it was in familiar use in their own language, habitually employed it as applied to Christian baptism in the specific sense *to immerse*, and in all respects in such a manner as to indicate that they regarded this as THE MEANING, the established, recognized, indisputable meaning of the term, alike in its religious and secular applications :—and we may ask, was not all possibility of its being understood in any sense but that of immersion, by those to whom the writings of the evangelists and apostles were originally addressed, absolutely precluded ?

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## APPENDIX.

NOTE, *see page 8.*—In appeals to the lexicons to determine the signification of words, an important distinction but seldom appreciated is to be observed between those definitions which relate merely to their *applications* or *uses*, and those which are expressive of their real *import*. In the case of a large class of terms, most of the secondary definitions attached, have reference *not to their proper meaning*, but simply to the manner in which they are used or applied, and not unfrequently to the *effects* indicated by the act designated. This is especially true of words which, like *baptizo*, are descriptive of *specific, external acts*. An example or two will make the truth of this remark obvious to every mind. A secondary definition given by Dr. Webster to the word *dip*, is “to wet, to moisten;” and Milton is cited as authority. Now every one acquainted with the English language knows that this is not a definition of what the term properly *means*: nor is there any thing in the usage of Milton to which allusion is evidently had, to afford the slightest ground for such an opinion. And the terms “to wet,” “to moisten,” are obviously introduced by Dr. Webster merely to define a *figurative use* or *application* of the word. To express the *simple idea* of wetting or moistening, the word *dip* is never employed.

Another example is furnished in the definition, “to cleanse, to purify;” given to the word *sprinkle*, reference being made to Heb. 10: 22. It will,

we presume, be universally admitted, that these terms do not properly define the *meaning* of the word as used in the passage cited. It is readily perceived, that direct allusion is had to the idea of *sprinkling* as observed in connection with the offering of the Jewish sacrifices, an allusion which can be indicated by no term that does not properly *mean* to sprinkle; and that the definition given relates solely to its figurative application, expressing especially the *effects* resulting from the transaction designated,—and not to its simple meaning. The lexicons of every language furnish numerous examples illustrative of the same fact. Indeed, in many cases of words belonging to the class including *baptizo*, most of the secondary definitions are to be explained on this principle. The fact, therefore, that many of the lexicons append to those definitions of *baptizo*, which refer directly to its real import, as to immerse, to dip, to submerge, to overwhelm, certain secondary definitions, as to bathe, to wash, to drench, to confound, etc., does not in itself create a presumption that they are, even in the opinion of the lexicographer, to be understood as expressing the proper *meaning* of the word. Indeed there is satisfactory evidence, in many cases at least, that they were *not* so regarded by the authors of the lexicons. This accounts for the fact that in some of the standard lexicons of the Greek language the *only* definitions given to *baptizo* are of the former class, (an important fact to be observed,) while in others one or more of the latter class are appended. We doubt not that the great body of Greek lexicographers, would readily unite in the following testimony of *Dr. Anthon*. “The primary meaning of the word, is to dip or immerse; and its secondary meanings, if ever it had any, all refer in some way or other, to the same leading idea.” The clause, “if ever it had any,” is specially deserving of notice. Did the word possess a distinct, clearly defined “secondary meaning,” it cannot be imagined that *Dr. Anthon* would have been ignorant of its existence. The purport of his remark evidently is, that the only proper, distinctive meaning of the word is “to dip or immerse;” in case, however, certain figurative or special *applications* of the term be designated “secondary meanings,” they are such, not as distinguished from its primary meaning, but only as they involve a reference to “the same leading idea,” that of *immersion*.

A proper regard for this distinction in the definitions of words, by *Dr. Carson*, would have prevented a remark with respect to the testimony of “the lexicons,” which is as untrue in fact, as it is unfortunate in view of the use, and in most cases, *unwarrantable* use which has been made of it by his opponents. *Dr. Carson*, without his usual discrimination, alludes to the secondary definitions given to *baptizo*, as if they were necessarily intended to be definitions of its “meaning”—a mistake, which, as is the more surprising, he extends equally to *all* the words in the language, p. 56. And it is only with reference to the definitions attached to them conceived of *as such*, that he calls in question the authority of the lexicons. The position of *Dr. Carson*, *as explained* by himself—and which is always misrepresented, unless presented *as thus explained*—is essentially the same with that which, we are confident, the great body of Greek lexicographers would unhesitatingly assume, to wit, that what are given as secondary definitions of the word, “are not properly meanings at all,” but are “made out by *implication*, or in some other way.”



# THE NEW TESTAMENT

ON THE

## IMPORT OF THE WORD BAPTISM.

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Statement of the nature of the argument.—ANCIENT TRANSLATIONS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.—The idea expressed by *baptizo*, understood by the early Christians.—Manner of expressing it in other languages.—Translation of *baptizo* in the ancient Latin, the Syriac, the Coptic, and other versions.—The impossibility of describing a simple wetting or washing, involving no allusion to mode, as an immersion.—USE OF BAPTIZO BY THE SACRED WRITERS.—1. Argument from its use in construction in Mat. 3 : 11, and Mark 1 : 8.—Force of the preposition *ev*.—So used as to avoid ambiguity.—Illustration from the English phrase 'immersed in water.'—2. Use of *baptizo* in Acts 8 : 36-39.—Descriptive of a definite act.—The attending circumstances obviously relating to baptism as such.—3. Allusion to baptism as immersion in 1 Cor. 10 : 1, 2.—Form of construction adopted.—Nature of the facts specified.—4. Baptism of the Holy Spirit.—Argument from the construction.—The idea of pouring, wetting, or purifying, utterly inadmissible.—The figure of immersion peculiarly adapted to express the thing obviously intended.—Import of *baptizo* in its customary figurative applications.—Occasion of its use with reference to the Holy Spirit.—Sense in which *baptizo* in this application of it was understood and employed by the Greek fathers.—Admissions of Pædobaptist writers.—5. Baptism of fire.—Allusion to the fire of punishment.—Exposition of Mat. 3 : 11, and Luke 3 : 16.—6. Use of the term in Mat. 20 : 22, 23, and Luke 12 : 50.—The meanings to wash, to wet, to purify, absolutely precluded.—Nature of the figure undisputed.—7. Argument from the use of *baptisma* in Rom. 6 : 4, and Col. 2 : 12.—Immersion as involving a burial in the water, the uniform practice of the apostolic churches.—Difficulty of disconnecting the nature of the rite from the literal, customary import of the term designating it.—Final statement and application of the argument.—INTENT AND EXPLICITNESS OF THE COMMAND.—The act expressed by the word *baptizo*, the thing enjoined and intended to be observed.—1. The difficulty of conceiving for what other purpose the term should have been selected.—Illustration from



the Lord's supper.—2. Baptism in cases of *figurative* allusion to the rite uniformly presented simply as *immersion*.—3. Various Scriptural passages without meaning, except as baptism is regarded as being essentially immersion.—4. Immersion uniformly specified as *the* thing required.—5. Incidental allusions to the nature of the rite.—6. Nature of the rite as described in Rom. 6 : 4, and Col. 2 : 12.—7. Baptism as immersion, designed to be symbolical.—8. The commission recorded Mat. 23 : 19, 20, and Mark 16 : 15, 16, designed to extend to all nations, and all ages.—9. The baptism of Christ as our example.

In a former number, it has been conclusively shown, on the ground of the most unexceptionable proof, drawn from a great variety of sources, that the import of the Greek term BAPTIZO, whether as occurring in ordinary Greek usage, or as applied by Jewish authors to the rites of religion, or as familiarly used both in its religious and secular applications by the early Christian writers, is properly and specifically *to immerse*. From these facts, the conclusion is inevitable that immersion was the only sense which could possibly have been attached to it as employed by our Lord and his apostles, in describing the ordinance of Christian profession.

In the present treatise, we propose to establish the correctness of this conclusion, from evidence furnished by THE NEW TESTAMENT ITSELF. In the discussion of this subject as usually conducted, sufficient importance seems not to be attached to the facts pertaining to the use of *baptizo* in passages in the New Testament having specific reference, either direct or figurative, to the rite of Christian baptism. Not merely are these facts without exception in harmony with the evidence derived from other sources, but it is deserving consideration, that they constitute an interesting and independent source of proof, perfectly decisive in itself, that immersion is in the case the proper signification of the term.

Before proceeding, however, directly to the examination of this point, we call attention briefly to the teaching of

the sacred writers respecting the act designated by *baptizo*, as stated by the early Christians in

THE ANCIENT TRANSLATIONS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

It is a fact deserving special attention, that the New Testament in all the various languages in which it was read during the early ages of Christianity, uniformly affirmed that Christ had expressly enjoined that those who should become "disciples" to him, should be "*immersed* in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."\* We apprehend that the argument from this source is seldom appreciated according to its real force. It is not, to say the least, usually presented, in discussions on this subject, with the distinctness and prominence which its real bearing on the question under examination demands.

Let the reader endeavor to bring before his mind the circumstances under which these ancient translations were made. In the extension of the gospel throughout the world, it became necessary that its requisitions, as well as its truths, should be expressed in the languages of the nations among whom it was preached. For this purpose, terms would naturally be selected corresponding in import with those in which these requisitions were originally inculcated. Among these requisitions, submission to *baptism*, as a means of professing the gospel, was necessarily prominent. It being the first public act made incumbent on those who

\* The very few instances in which the word *baptizo*, having become incorporated with other languages, is found in the versions of the New Testament made into these languages, are in no sense exceptions to the truth of this remark, as there is decisive proof, independent of the established import of the Greek term, that whenever it is so used, it has the sense to *dip*, or *immerse*. Tertullian, for example, one of the earliest Latin Fathers, while he usually expresses the Greek *baptisma* by *baptismus*, employs for *baptizo*, *tingo* (to dip), occasionally, however, *mergito* (to immerse.)

became converted to Christianity, a distinct conception of the idea expressed by the word *baptizo*, as denoting the thing required, would become co-extensive with the promulgation of the gospel. When, therefore, the New Testament, upon its completion, was translated into other languages, as the Latin and Syriac, the terms employed to represent this idea, uniformly expressed in the original text by *baptizo* and *baptisma*, could hardly fail to be an expression of their real import. Here were men, Christian scholars, the immediate successors of the apostles, perfectly familiar with the Greek language in all its variety of application, secular and religious, knowing fully what was the idea attached to the command to be baptized; they wish to express this idea in other languages, in a direct and simple translation of the word *baptizo*; and what terms do they employ? What do they affirm to be the import of the word? As it cannot be supposed that they were ignorant of its meaning, it is no less incredible that they should have designedly represented in the translation that the thing required was essentially different from what was expressed in the original language. And yet it is a fact worthy of notice, that in all the translations of the New Testament, made during the period commencing with the age immediately succeeding that of the apostles, and extending through six or seven centuries, the word is rendered by no term that does not correspond in import with the original, customary signification of *baptizo*; i. e., that does not denote the specific act of *dipping* or *immersion*.

In the early *Latin* versions, made during the second century,—passages from which appear in the works of Tertullian,—the term employed as a translation of *baptizo*, is *tingo*. That *tingo* corresponds exactly with *baptizo* in the sense, to dip, to immerse, will not, we presume, be called in question. Indeed it is given in standard English and Latin lexicons as the simplest definition of the word

*dip*. It is the term usually occurring in the works of Tertullian, alike in passages quoted from the New Testament, and in his own descriptions of baptism, to indicate the act of baptizing; although he occasionally uses in its place, as being perfectly equivalent, *mergito* (to immerse); and as a corresponding Latin term for baptism, *intinctio*, a dipping into, an immersion. Its meaning as a translation of *baptizo* in the New Testament, is thus, even on grounds independent of its proper, ordinary import, placed beyond all dispute.

In the *Syriac* version, made early in the second century, the term employed for *baptizo* is *amad*, the meaning of which, as given in the lexicons, is *to dip, to immerse, to bathe*. The conjecture of certain modern writers that it may mean to *stand*, or to *confirm*, is entirely without support from the usage of the language. That it properly signifies to immerse, is obvious from passages not relating to the rite of Christian baptism. In Num. 31 : 23, it is used in translating the passage, "All that abideth not the fire, ye shall make go through the water." The expression "to make go through the water," used with reference to utensils that were to be "put into water," Lev. 11 : 32, is admitted by all to denote immersion. It is accordingly so rendered in the *Syriac* in the use of *amad*, "ye shall immerse in water." By Ephraim Syrus,\* of the fourth century, *amad* is used to express the physical act by which the *head* of the Redeemer in being "bowed down" in his baptism, was *placed beneath* the water of the Jordan; a use of the term which restricts it in its import to the specific act of *immersion*, and which shows conclusively that this was its distinctive meaning.

In the ancient *Egyptian* or *Coptic* version of the New Testament, made during the third century, *baptizo* is rendered by a term, the proper, distinctive meaning of which

\* See Gotch's Examination.

is, *to immerse, to submerge, to sink*. This is sufficiently indicated by its use in passages not relating to the ordinance of baptism; as Mat. 18:6,—“*submerged* in the depths of the sea;” Mat. 14:30, “And beginning to *sink*, he cried Lord, save me.”

For similar proof respecting the manner in which the word is translated in the *Gothic*, the *Ethiopic*, and the *Armenian* versions, the reader is referred to “Gotch’s Critical Examination of the rendering of the word *baptizo* in the ancient and many of the modern versions of the New Testament.”

Translations made at a much later period are for obvious reasons of very little authority in determining the point now under examination. The only facts with which we are concerned in our present investigation, are those which illustrate the sense in which the word was used by the primitive teachers of Christianity. And the fact that in the very age succeeding that in which the New Testament was completed, and among those who had in many instances doubtless received their idea of baptism from the teaching of the apostles themselves, it is rendered by terms which express the specific act of *immersion*, sustained by the fact that it is translated by no term that does not denote immersion during the first seven centuries of the Christian era, is proof that this was the sense attached to it by the primitive Christians, the force of which, we hesitate not to say, no unprejudiced mind can possibly resist. Had they, understanding that it denoted a simple washing or wetting irrespectively of mode, have rendered it *to immerse*, it would have been, not simply a failure to represent its real import, but the inculcation of a positive falsehood *as to the very nature of the thing indicated and required*; for although an *immersion in water* is in reality a washing or bathing, and is frequently referred to as being such by the Greek Fathers, it is not true that a washing which has no respect



to mode, is an immersion, in which mode is the very thing involved. It is worthy of notice, moreover, that the only name by which the rite was familiarly known among the Christians who used the Greek language, through which it could possibly have acquired the appellation "immersion" in other languages, was *baptisma* itself. Far greater, of course, is the difficulty of conceiving of any ground on which this could have been given as the simple meaning of the *word*, except as it is found in its real import. Indeed it is absolutely impossible to account for the fact, that the early Christians, in their translations of the New Testament, have uniformly represented the thing expressed and required by *baptizo* to be the specific act of immersion, except on the ground that they understood this to be its proper meaning.

Our object, however, in the present treatise, is more especially to exhibit the evidence for the import of *baptizo* in the New Testament, afforded by

#### ITS USE BY THE SACRED WRITERS.

I. And our first proof, that as applied by them to Christian baptism, it properly means to *immerse*, will be derived from the manner in which it is used IN CONSTRUCTION in Mat. 3: 6, 11, and Mark 1: 5, 8, 9; particularly in the expression, "I indeed have baptized you *ἐν ὕδατι* in water." Comp. John 1: 26, 33. That this is phraseology exactly adapted to express in the Greek language the idea of *immersion in water*, will not be disputed. That the only proper mode of rendering the words *ἐν ὕδατι* (*en hudati*), standing alone, is *in water*, will not be called in question by any one acquainted with Greek usage. The English expression is an exact representative of the Greek. It exhibits the idea that is first suggested, as the eye meets the words in composition; and if in any instance a different translation



may be adopted, it is only from the force of other words in the sentence. The writers of the New Testament, although in certain connections they occasionally use the preposition *εν* (*en*) in the sense of *with*, as denoting means or instrument, have, nevertheless, given abundant proof that they were not ignorant of its natural and proper force as a Greek term: and they are accordingly careful, especially in cases in which external transactions are involved, to use it in such a manner *as to avoid ambiguity*. We hesitate not to say that the assumption that *εν ὕδατι* (*en hudati*) in Mark 1 : 8,—occurring in regimen with a word expressive of an act which in the case was performed “in the river,” (comp. ver. 5),—may be rendered *with water*, is not sustained by an example,—which in any proper sense can be considered parallel or analogous,—in the entire usage of the writers of the New Testament. But, independently of these considerations, the meaning of the preposition is sufficiently obvious from its use in the parallel expressions, “baptized *in* (*en*) the Jordan,” Mat. 3 : 6, “baptized *in* the river,” Mark 1 : 5. It being immediately added, in the same passage, and in a statement of the same transaction, “baptized *in* (*en*) water,” it cannot admit of a doubt that the preposition has in each case the same force.

Now let the reader call to mind the universally admitted fact, that *baptizo* was regarded by those using the Greek language, as an appropriate term for expressing the definite *act of immersion*. There would, of course, be a tendency on the part of both Greeks and Jews, to attach to it, especially as used to designate an act described as performed “in the river,” the idea of immersion. And had it been the intention of the sacred writers, as is assumed, to indicate that this was *not* the idea designed to be expressed, but that the term was used in a sense which had no respect to mode, is it credible, is it conceivable, that they should have employed the very form of construction which

of all was the best adapted to present this idea to the mind?

To present the Pædobaptist argument for a secondary sense of the word in the New Testament, in the light of the positions assumed in its defence,—and in the most favorable light which those positions as assumed will admit of,—let us suppose that the English word *immerse*, in addition to its proper modal signification, had acquired the secondary sense, to *wash*, or to *purify*, while in certain cases the preposition *in* had the force of *with*. Is it conceivable that one wishing to convey the idea of washing or wetting or purifying *with water*, without respect to mode, should select for this purpose the expression “*immersed in water?*” and should immediately add, in reference to the same transaction, “*immersed in the river?*” Would not the very form of expression selected be conclusive proof that the word “*immerse*” was used in its proper modal sense? and would not a desire to indicate this fact be at once regarded as supplying the reason for its selection?

In this illustration we have allowed the Pædobaptist assumptions, with respect to the verb and preposition, to have their full force. And yet it must be obvious, we think, to every mind, that the very positions assumed would, even if they were admitted as true, naturally lead, on all acknowledged principles of interpretation, to a conclusion directly the opposite of the one attempted to be drawn from them.

II. Another interesting proof of our position is furnished by the passage, ACTS viii., 36-39, “And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?”—“And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were

come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip." The fact that the sight of a certain water along the wayside, suggested to the mind of the eunuch the idea of immediate submission to baptism, is certainly adapted to give the impression that he had been taught to regard some body of water sufficient for immersion, as *requisite* to a performance of the thing involved in the ordinance. We call attention, however, more especially to the fact that the word *baptizo* in the remark, "and he *baptized* him," is descriptive of a certain *definite act* performed at a point in the water, which by a descent into the water had been gained for that purpose. Few will hesitate to admit, in view of the whole transaction as narrated, that that act was *an immersion*: and would it be possible for one familiar with Greek usage in regard to *baptizo*, meeting with the term in such a connection, to resist the conviction that it was used for the purpose of designating the act involved *as an immersion*? The sacred historian could not have failed to perceive that this would be the impression naturally made on the mind of the reader; and had he intended to designate baptism as a simple washing or wetting, it is incredible that he should have been at pains to describe the administration of it in such a manner as inevitably to direct attention to the idea of *immersion*, as expressed in the original import of the term.

Again, what possible reason can be assigned for his describing with such particularity, the circumstances pertaining to a *mere mode* of administering the ordinance? The coming to a certain water, the conversation which ensued, the going down into the water, the coming up out of it, are obviously all introduced into the narrative on account of their relation to *baptism as such*. No one, we presume, will deny that the whole representation of the passage naturally leads to this conclusion; although it is

in reality, as will be seen, a conclusion which involves the admission, that baptism was regarded *as immersion*.

III. We next call attention to the allusion to baptism in 1 COR. 10 : 1, 2, "Moreover, brethren, we would not that ye should be ignorant how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." We cannot resist the conviction, that in the expositions usually given to this passage, its real force in its bearing on the particular point now under discussion, has been overlooked. The attention, while occupied in tracing analogies between the event indicated and the rite of baptism, has been diverted from the fact more especially deserving notice, to wit, that the nature and form of the apostle's statement, including the construction of the language, the character of the facts mentioned, and the order in which they are introduced, are evidently expressly accommodated or adapted to the idea (*immersion*), which the word *baptizo* properly and literally expresses. We see no way in which they can be accounted for on any other supposition. So that the passage, so far from being merely "consistent" with the idea of immersion, on the ground of a "figurative" allusion to the "rite," presents in reality a positive and interesting proof that immersion is the simple, literal meaning of the word.

It will be observed that the apostle, in verses 1-12, is comparing the experience of the Israelites, in respect to various facts and incidents in their history, their temptations, dangers, occasions for watchfulness, etc., with that of the Christian church. And he first notices the fact, that they "were all *under the cloud*, and all *passed through the sea*." But in what respect was this analogous to any thing pertaining to the experience of Christians? It cannot be imagined that the apostle would thus particularly and formally allude to certain facts as analogous, without giv-

ing the slightest hint as to the ground of the analogy. We look in vain, however, for any such hint or explanation, except as it is found in the appended clause, "and were all *baptized* unto Moses *in the cloud* and *in the sea*." This is most obviously the filling up or completion of the allusion to "the cloud" and "the sea" in the preceding verse. And the only satisfactory reason that can be assigned for the apostle's remark, that "they were all *under the cloud* and *passed through the sea*," is that he wished to prepare the mind of the reader for the allusion to baptism, by showing *on what ground* it could be said with propriety that they were "baptized," i. e., *immersed*:—and to complete the representation, and present to the mind still more clearly the applicability of a term meaning to *immerse* to the transaction, he represents them as being like immersed persons "*in the cloud* and *in the sea*."

It is customary with writers to speak of the Israelites as 'descending into the sea in obedience to the command of Moses, passing through dry-shod, and *emerging* safely on the opposite shore.' An "*emersion*," however, implies an *immersion*. And if we may, in allusion to the passage of the Israelites through the sea, familiarly employ language descriptive of the former, the apostle could easily conceive how their situation while "in the sea" might properly be indicated by a term expressive of the latter; especially as they were at the same time "*in the cloud*"—as in passing over them it may be supposed to have enveloped them, and have thus rendered the immersion complete.

The supposition of certain commentators that the allusion in the passage is to the "*initiation* of the Israelites into the religion promulgated by Moses," is precluded by the whole representation of the facts specified as pertaining to the event. Why the passage of the Red Sea, the occasion of a simple miraculous event occurring in the journey-



ing of the children of Israel, unattended by any religious rites, should be fixed upon by the apostle as the time of this "initiation," and that too, in distinction from other occasions upon which there was a general and formal consecration of themselves to God as his people, we find it impossible to conjecture. But, admitting the possibility of this, why should the apostle, in alluding to this event, describe it particularly as a "*passing through the sea,*" and a being "*in the sea?*" These surely are not the circumstances, nor is this the phraseology, adapted to represent it as an initiation. They can be explained only on the ground that they are introduced on account of their relation to baptism as *immersion*. Again, why does the apostle call attention to the fact, that the people were "*under the cloud*" and "*in the cloud?*" The usual position of the cloud, as a means of *direction* to them in their journeyings, was *before* them, Ex. 13 : 22. As a means of *protection* and *separation* from their enemies, on the passage of the Red Sea, it was *behind* them, Ex. 14 : 19. And yet the apostle, omitting all allusion to these facts as not being suited to his purpose, calls attention to a circumstance which was merely incidental to their privileges as described in the Old Testament, to wit, that it was true of them that "they were all *under the cloud*" and "*in the cloud,*" and were consequently all actually "*baptized,*" i. e., immersed by means of it;—a result of their submission to the direction of Moses.

It thus becomes perfectly obvious, that the apostle's allusion to "the cloud" and "the sea," accompanied with the special statement that "they all *passed through the sea,*" and "were all *under the cloud,*" and were all "*baptized in the cloud and in the sea,*" can be accounted for on no other ground than that there is direct reference to the idea of *immersion* as expressed by the word *baptizo*.

But while the apostle is thus careful in his selection of



facts, in his manner of introducing and stating them, in fine, in the whole phraseology and representation of the passage, to show that the Israelites were the subjects of what might properly be designated a "baptism," i. e., an *immersion*, he intimates that, in a certain aspect of it, it may be viewed as having answered a similar *purpose* with Christian immersion or baptism. As Christians in being immersed in water on professing their faith in Christ, are *recognized as his people*, and reminded of their distinguished privileges as members of the Christian community, so the children of Israel in being conducted by Moses "into the midst of the sea," and in having the cloud which usually went before them, by a special interposition *pass over* them, and take its position behind them, for the purpose of protecting them from their enemies, received an *immersion* in the cloud and in the sea, which could not fail to remind them more forcibly of the fact, that they belonged to a people enjoying the favor and protection and watchcare of Jehovah, than could possibly have been done by any simple *rite* of "immersion," such as exists as a badge of connection with the Christian church. And yet even *such* an immersion did not preserve them from his judgments when they apostatized. Nor is there any ground for the impression that those who have been received to Christian immersion are safe, except as they act consistently with their profession. Comp. vs. 1, 2, 5-11.

IV. Another use of *baptizo* decisive of its meaning in the New Testament, appears in passages which relate to THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT; as Mark 1:8, "I indeed have baptized you in (*en*) water, but he shall baptize you in (*en*) the Holy Spirit."

The sense in which *baptizo* is here used, is indicated by the very *construction*. The use of the preposition *en* (*en*), with reference to the baptism of water, is, as we have

shown, (see page 7), decisive that it should be rendered according to its natural, proper import, *in—in water*. And the same construction being continued upon the repetition of the verb in the other part of the sentence, it obviously demands the same translation—“*in the Holy Spirit.*”<sup>\*</sup> It thus becomes obvious that the baptism of the Spirit involves the idea so common with the sacred writers, of being “in the Spirit,” Rev. 1 : 10 ; 4 : 2 ; Gal. 5 : 25 ; and the only sense claimed for the word, which corresponds with this representation, is that of immersion. And it is worthy of notice, that although in some instances of the use of the term in its literal acceptation, this precise form of expression is omitted, as being unnecessary, it is, in its figurative application with reference to the gift of the Holy Spirit, uniformly retained, as if expressly designed to aid the mind in forming a clear conception of the nature of the figure. See Luke 3 : 16 ; Acts 1 : 5 ; 11 : 16.

Again, immersion is the only sense claimed for *baptizo* which will meet the exigencies of the case with respect to the nature of the thing designated. The idea of *pouring*, so frequently introduced by Pædobaptist writers in connection with the baptism of the Spirit, is not even claimed as involved in the *meaning of the word*, and does not, consequently, properly come within the range of our present investigation. *Pouring* and *baptism*, moreover, as related to the gift of the Spirit, not merely are never represented by the sacred writers as being the same, but are uniformly spoken of as *entirely distinct* ; the former being invariably predicated *of the Spirit*, not of those who receive his influences.

The sense *to wet*, will not, of course, be urged as having any claim to regard. And the familiar use of the term

<sup>\*</sup> It is a fact worthy of notice, that this is the mode of rendering actually occurring in the earlier English versions of the New Testament,—“in water,” “in the Holy Ghost.”

in such a connection, is positive proof that wetting is not what it properly expresses,—is not its meaning in the New Testament, and least of all in such passages as Mark 1 : 8 ; Acts 1 : 5, etc. ; although in them there is direct reference to the act of Christian baptism.

An insuperable objection to the idea of *washing* or *purification*, is involved in the fact that baptism in the Holy Spirit was not simply an *effect* of his operation on the mind or heart, but properly a *transaction*, by which the disciples became possessed of the abundant supplies of his influence. Compare Acts 11 : 15, 16 ; 1 : 8 ; Luke 24 : 49 ; John 7 : 39 ; Tit. 3 : 6 ; especially Acts 1 : 5 with Acts 2 : 1-4. It is to the “gift” of the Spirit, or to the Spirit *as given*, as *copiously imparted*,—not as operating on the heart—that allusion is uniformly had. The “purification of the heart” by the Spirit in the exercise of “repentance” and “faith,” moreover, was in reality a *prerequisite* to the reception of the “gift” involved in the “baptism” of the Spirit ; and could not, of course, in the nature of the case, be specifically the thing itself. See Acts 15 : 7-9 ; 2 : 38, 39 ; John 3 : 3-8 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 22 compared with Acts 11 : 15, 16, 18 ; 1 : 5.

It thus becomes obvious, from the very nature of the thing designated, not less than from the construction used, that all the meanings claimed for *baptizo* to the exclusion of immersion, are equally inadmissible. The only sense which the exigencies of the case in either of these respects will admit of, is that which properly and naturally belongs to the word, viz., immersion.

But, in addition to these considerations, *baptizo* in the sense, to immerse, is *peculiarly adapted* to express the idea obviously intended to be conveyed by its use with reference to the influences of the Holy Spirit. It is suited to indicate at once the *transaction* involving the bestowment of the promised “gift,” and the “*abundance*” in which it is

represented as having been bestowed, Tit. 3 : 6 ; Acts 2 : 1-4. And there is not probably another single term in the language better adapted to express these two ideas. The disciples of our Lord had, upon their conversion to Christianity, been "cleansed" or purified in heart by the influence of the Holy Spirit, see John 3 : 3-8 ; 13 : 11 ; 15 : 3. But they were, after the ascension of Christ, to be "baptized" in it ; it was to be imparted to them in *extraordinary measure* ; and the result would be to prepare them abundantly for the work to which they had been called, especially in the *illumination* of their minds, and in endowing them with spiritual gifts, John 14-16 ; Luke 24 : 45 ; Acts 1 : 8, compared with 1 Cor. 12 : 6-13 ; 1 John 2 : 20, 27 ; Acts 2 : 1-4 ; 10 : 44-46 ; 19 : 6. And it deserves notice, that of all the figures employed to indicate an extraordinary or abundant measure of divine influence, none are more natural and expressive, or more frequently called into requisition, than those which in some way involve the idea of *an immersion*. This is seen in the familiar expressions,—"*overwhelmed* with a sense of divine things ;" "*swallowed up* in the love of Christ ;" "*sinking* into the will of God ;" "*absorbed* in communion with him ;" "*deluged* or *inundated* with the divine glory ;" "*immersed* in a heavenly atmosphere ;" etc.

Another consideration not sufficiently regarded in the examination of this point as usually conducted, relates to the sense in which those acquainted with Greek usage had been accustomed to hear the word *baptizo* used in its *figurative applications*. The idea of "baptism" as applied figuratively to the mind, was one with which they were familiar ; and this was invariably the idea of *immersion*. It is customary with Greek authors to represent one who becomes completely subjected to any influence, or gives himself up fully to it, as being "*baptized*," i. e., *immersed* in it. Hence the expressions, "baptized, (i. e., immersed)

in cares," "in grief," "in sleep," "in intoxication," "in investigations," "in business," etc., representing the mind as being either absorbed, or overpowered, or entirely subjected. Those to whom this representation was familiar, would, of course, naturally understand the term, as applied to the mind brought into complete subjection to the influence of the Holy Spirit, in some sense involving the idea of immersion. Indeed it would have been difficult for them to determine what other sense they possibly could attach to it.

The immediate occasion of the use of the figure of baptism or immersion "in the Holy Spirit," is obviously to be found in the use of baptism or immersion in water as the initiatory rite of Christianity. Mat. 3 : 11 ; Acts 1 : 5 ; etc. And it is this association which gives it its special interest and beauty. The immersion or baptism involved, was alike in both cases an indication of connection with the kingdom of Christ. In the one case, however, it was an immersion of the body, which was at most a mere profession of an interest in the gospel ; while an immersion in the influences of the Holy Spirit shed forth on the primitive disciples in rich profusion, extended in its effects to the soul ; and involving a real, efficacious agency, it was, not a mere symbol, but an actual realization of the blessings of the new dispensation.\* Comp. Mark 1 : 8 ; Acts 1 : 5.

In conclusion, we call attention to the sense in which the word *baptizo* as used in the New Testament with reference to the Holy Spirit, was understood by the ancient

\* It seems not to have been sufficiently regarded in the discussions relating to the use of *baptizo* in the New Testament, that while the word in its *literal* acceptation, properly denotes, as used by Greek authors, the act of putting beneath the surface, it more commonly expresses in its *figurative* applications an immersion produced by an influence conceived of as coming upon the object immersed, and thus inundating or overwhelming it, taking complete possession of it : and in this respect



*Greek Fathers.* While they frequently represent the baptism of the Spirit as being in reality a purification, they indicate that *it was such only in its effects*; and in precisely the same manner they describe it as an illumination, a regeneration, an enduing with spiritual gifts, etc. Whenever they have occasion to refer to the *import of the term* as denoting the transaction involved, they are united in representing it as used with reference to its characteristic sense, *to immerse*. They sometimes allude to it simply as presenting a "figure of speech" indicative of "the *abundance* of the gift." In other cases, one who is "baptized in the Holy Spirit," is described as "*inundated* abundantly with the gifts of the Spirit," or as being in the condition of an object "baptized" or *immersed* in some fluid, which takes complete possession of it, and transforms it to its own nature. Again, the "soul within" is represented as "*encompassed*" or "*enveloped*" by the indwelling Spirit.

These facts are important as showing in what sense Greek authors familiar with all the uses of *baptizo*, literal and figurative, understood and used the phrase "baptized in the Holy Spirit." Had there been any thing unnatural or inconsistent with ordinary Greek usage, in the idea involved, none surely could have been in more favorable circumstances than they to appreciate it. And the fact, that,—instead of seeking to ascribe to the word *baptizo* as thus employed some other acceptance,—they freely and familiarly use it in the sense, *to immerse*, and in all respects in such a manner as to indicate that they re-

it corresponds entirely with customary usage with regard to the English term *immerse*. This distinction would, of course, naturally suggest itself to the minds of those to whom the language of Mark 1 : 8, was addressed : and allusion to immersion "in the Holy Spirit," would at once supply the idea of his coming upon them in such measure that they should become immersed, enveloped, overwhelmed by his presence and absorbing, subduing, all-pervading influence.



garded this as *the* meaning, the natural, established, recognized meaning of the term in such a connection, furnishes evidence with respect to its real import, which it seems impossible to resist.

The conviction that none of the secondary senses claimed for the term are possible in its use with reference to the Holy Spirit, has doubtless led to the admission, expressed or implied, on the part of most Pædobaptist critics, that in this application of it, it is used with allusion to its characteristic import, *to immerse*. Hence the use, in explanation of what is really indicated by it, of such expressions as "largely imbue," "abundantly furnish," "exuberant abundance," "plentifulness," "copiousness," "overwhelming," "surrounding," etc., all utterly irrelevant, it will be perceived, to the sense to wet, to wash, or to purify. "The basis of this usage," says Prof. Stuart, "is very plainly to be found in the designation by *baptizo* of the idea of *overwhelming*, i. e. of surrounding on all sides with a fluid." Dr. Robinson defining the word *baptizo* as thus applied, says, "metaphorically, and in direct allusion to the sacred rite,—to *overwhelm*, richly furnish with all spiritual gifts."

But if, as is thus generally and unhesitatingly admitted, the word, in certain instances of its use in the New Testament, in which there is obviously direct allusion to the rite of baptism, is used to express the idea of bringing into a state of immersion, we cannot conceive how it is possible to escape the conclusion that this is its meaning in other passages in which there is still more "direct allusion to the rite;" especially in cases in which, as in Mark 1 : 8, its use in the one case is directly suggested by its use in the other. An attempt to translate the term as occurring in such passages, *to wet* or *to purify* in one part of the sentence, while it is rendered *to overwhelm* or *immerse* in the other, would be in itself a sufficient exposure of the utter falsity of the assumption that wetting or purifying is

any part of its meaning in the New Testament. Its import in both parts of the sentence is so obviously the same, with such modification only as its customary use as literally and figuratively applied, naturally involves, that it must, we think, be acknowledged as indisputable.

V. Another figurative use of the term in the New Testament, indicative of its import, is in the expression, "BAPTIZED IN (*en*) FIRE," in Mat. 3 : 11, and Luke 3 : 18.

This application of the term is decisive proof that the sense so commonly claimed by Pædobaptists for it when used as a designation of the rite of Christian baptism, viz. *to wet*, or *to wash*, is not, cannot be, its real import. The very nature of the baptizing fluid positively precludes the idea of washing or wetting. Indeed the effect produced is presented in the light of contrast with washing.

Few will presume to assert that there is any usage among either Greeks or Jews, to suggest the idea of *purification* as indicating, *not washing*, *not wetting* in any manner, but the effect of the action of "fire." And, aside from this, it is undeniable that the idea of *immersion* in a spiritual influence compared to fire, an influence encircling, pervading, completely possessing the spirit, would be far more expressive and appropriate, than the simple idea of purification as one of the effects produced.

It is obvious, however, that the baptism of fire indicated Mat. 3 : 11 ; and Luke 3 : 16, is of a nature to preclude absolutely all idea of purification even as an effect. The allusion is clearly to the fire of *punishment*.

Let it be observed that in Mat. 3 : 10-12, in three consecutive sentences in the same passage, occur the expressions, "cut down and cast into the *fire*," "baptized in *fire*," "burn up the chaff with unquenchable *fire*." That in one of these expressions thus connected, the word "*fire*" should have been employed to represent an idea in

no way related to what is expressed by it in the other two instances, is, to say the least, exceedingly improbable.

Again, we call attention especially to the fact that allusion to baptism "in fire" is found *only* in passages which relate directly to the punishment of the wicked, and in which *fire* is expressly mentioned as the means of this punishment; while in all the passages relating to the baptism of the Holy Spirit, in which it is omitted, the idea of punishment is not introduced. The omission of the words "and in fire," in Acts 1 : 5, and especially in Mark 1 : 8, is scarcely less significant as to the idea expressed by them, than their use in Mat. 3 : 11 and Luke 3 : 16. See also John 1 : 33.

Nor should it be overlooked that while the promise of baptism in the Holy Spirit in Mark 1 : 8, relates specifically to those who, "confessing their sins," had been baptized in water, the language of Luke 3 : 16, 17 is represented as spoken to the promiscuous multitude, comp. vs. 7 and 16; while in Mat. 3 : 7-12 those introduced to notice as more especially addressed, are designated a "generation of vipers."

Again, the whole tenor of the passage, Mat 3 : 7-12, clearly indicates that the language of verse 11 partakes of the nature of *warning*. The Baptist addressing the Sadducees and Pharisees, reminds them of their exposure to the "wrath to come,"—warns them against trusting in their relationship to Abraham as a ground of acceptance with God,—assures them that every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit will be cut down and cast into the fire; that while his baptism to which they seemed to attach so much importance, was simply "in water" in profession of repentance, the Messiah would baptize them in a manner which would be decisive in its results, which would involve real subjection, either voluntary or involuntary, to his authority, bringing them, if truly his, completely under

the influence of his Holy Spirit, or overwhelming them, if disowned of him, in the fire of the divine wrath,—it being as really his province in cleansing his threshing-floor, to burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire, as to gather the wheat into his garner.

That verse 11 should be abruptly introduced into such a passage as an isolated remark, having no direct connection in design and import with what constitutes the subject of discourse both in the preceding and succeeding verses, seems incredible.

Again, the very mode of construction adopted both in Mat. 3 : 11, 12, and Luke 18, 19, in connecting the allusion to the baptism of “fire” with what is said of exposure to “unquenchable fire,” seems obviously to indicate that the latter was intended to be directly illustrative of the former.

In the light of these considerations, we think it can hardly admit of a doubt that the allusion to “fire” in connection with baptism in Mat. 3 : 11, and Luke 3 : 16, is to the fire of punishment. And this involves the conclusion that no sense claimed for the term is possible but that of immersion. In this application of the word, there is positive proof that the terms, *to wet, to wash, to purify*, do not express the idea conveyed by it in the New Testament. It is furthermore worthy of notice, that the *design* of the transaction designated, is evidently presented in the light of direct *contrast* with the design of baptism as a religious rite. It was indeed a solemn transaction when the people resorting to the Baptist, and confessing their sins, acknowledged him as their spiritual guide, and placing themselves in his hands were immersed by him in the Jordan in profession of their repentance; but it would be a far more solemn transaction when placed in the hands of Him “who was to come after him,” they might be adjudged unworthy of admission into his kingdom, and be immersed in the

fire of the divine wrath. Compare the denunciation of judgment upon the wicked under the reign of the Messiah, accompanying the prediction respecting the appearance of John the Baptist in Mal. 4 : 1. Compare also the description of the times of the Messiah in Isa. 66 : 12-15. See also Ez. 22 : 20, where an *immersion* or *enveloping* in the excited flame, is circumstantially described, as indicative of the manner in which Jehovah would envelop his enemies in the "fire of his wrath."

VI. Another class of passages which are, if possible, still more decisive of the truth of the position now under consideration, are those in which the idea of baptism is introduced in connection with ALLUSION TO THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST AND OF HIS DISCIPLES ; as Luke 12 : 50 ; Mat. 20 : 22, 23 ; Mark 10 : 38, 39 ;—"I have a baptism to be baptized with ; and how am I straitened until it be accomplished ?" "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with ?"

That in these passages there is direct allusion to *the rite of baptism*, will be generally, perhaps universally, admitted without hesitation. That our Lord, for the purpose of expressing the simple idea that he was about to be overwhelmed with sufferings, irrespectively of all allusion to baptism as a religious rite, should have adopted the formal mode of statement exhibited in the passages,—the precise mode, moreover, which was customarily and familiarly used with reference to the rite,—is absolutely incredible. "To be baptized with the baptism of John ;" "to be baptized with the baptism of repentance ;" etc., were expressions with which the disciples were familiar, (comp. Luke 7 : 29, Acts 19 : 3, 4 ; ) and upon hearing their Master speak of "a baptism" which he was about to experience, they would naturally receive the impression that the reference



was to baptism in the same general sense of the word. This impression would be placed beyond all possible doubt in their minds, by the phraseology, "*I have a baptism,*"—"*a baptism to be baptized with,*"—"*ye shall be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with.*"

It being certain, therefore, that in these passages there is direct allusion to the rite of baptism, and that the words *baptize* and *baptism* are, of course, used in the same radical, characteristic sense as when employed to designate that rite, let us inquire what this sense is. It is, we believe, with scarcely an exception, either directly or tacitly admitted, that it is neither to *wet*, to *wash*, nor to *purify*. Indeed it will be seen at a glance, that either of these meanings would be altogether inappropriate. No one believes that Christ needed to be *purified*, especially in any sense applicable to the effect of his sufferings. Few will entertain the suggestion that he taught his *disciples*—see Mat. 20 : 23,—to look to their sufferings for purification from sin, and in this respect to compare their effect with that of his own sufferings upon himself. It is perfectly obvious, moreover, that our Lord does not refer to the *effect* of his sufferings, or of those of his disciples, in *any* sense, but rather to their *severity*. The particular object had in view in introducing the allusion to the baptism indicated, to wit, to discourage the ambitious views and aspirations of his disciples, (see Mat. 20 : 21–23); the reference to "*the cup that he was to drink of;*" the exclamation, "*how am I straitened until it be accomplished!*" in fine, the whole design and tenor of the passages, establish this position beyond all dispute. It has accordingly been almost universally admitted as undeniable by Pædobaptists themselves, that the allusion here to baptism is in the sense of *immersion*. Dr. Robinson in defining the word in the case, describes it as used "*in allusion to the rite,*" and gives us its import, "*to overwhelm with suffer-*



ings." Dr. Bloomfield, commenting on Mat. 20 : 22, says, "This metaphor of *immersion in water*, as expressive of being *overwhelmed* by affliction, is frequent both in Scriptural and classical writers." Dr. Barnes gives as the import of the phrase, "Are ye able to be baptized," etc., "Are ye able to be *plunged* deep in affliction, to have sorrows *cover* you like water, to be *sunk beneath* calamities as floods in the work of religion?" and refers in illustration to Ps. 69 : 2 ; Isa. 43 : 2 ; Ps. 124 : 4, 5 ; Lam. 3 : 54.

Now if it be indisputable that in these passages, in which, as is admitted, there is direct allusion to the rite of baptism, the word denotes "immersion," "plunging," "overwhelming," "sinking," is it not perfectly obvious that this is *the* sense in which it is used "in allusion to the rite" in the New Testament? Let the reader notice the real force of the evidence involved.—In the language employed by our Lord in these passages it is undeniable that there is allusion to the rite of baptism;—it is equally clear that it is referred to *as baptism*,—"I have a baptism to be baptized with;"—and yet the only sense of which the term *so used* is susceptible, is, as is almost universally admitted even by Pædobaptists, identified with its original, characteristic import, *to immerse*. Can any thing be more direct and decisive proof that our Lord and his disciples in their familiar allusions to baptism were accustomed to speak of it *as an immersion*; and that this, of course, was *the* sense in which they used the word?

VII. Our final proof will be derived from the use of *baptisma*, as designating the rite of baptism, in COL. 2 : 12, and ROM. 6 : 4 ; "Buried with him in baptism," "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death." It will be observed that the "burial" spoken of in these passages, is represented as being performed "by baptism" or "in baptism." Nor are christians,—although they are fre-

quently described as "dead," dead to sin, dead with Christ,—ever presented to view in the New Testament as those who have been "buried" by any other means than by baptism. Nor, on the other hand, are they ever represented as *dying by baptism*. The two ideas,—of burial and death,—the one relating to what is properly an external transaction, and the other to a change which respects the inward life, are kept entirely distinct in the representation of the sacred writers. And it is a fact especially deserving attention,—although it seems not always to have been properly regarded in attempts to interpret the language of the apostle,—that while the "death" spoken of in Rom. 6 : 4, is represented as pertaining to the *design* of baptism, the "burial" is alluded to as a transaction performed *with reference to this design*.

Such being the nature of the facts, it is not surprising that it should have been freely admitted by the great body of Pædobaptist commentators, that in Rom. 6 : 4, and Col. 2 : 12, there is reference to a burial involved in the ceremony of baptism, or to *immersion* in water as a symbolical act. But while this point is thus generally conceded as indisputable, the force of the language in another respect appears not to be properly appreciated. It will be observed that the apostle says nothing of immersion as "the prevailing *mode* in which baptism was anciently administered." If it be referred to at all, the reference is to it as involved in the *rite itself*, as identified with it. The apostle is speaking, without admitting an exception, of those who had submitted to baptism,—"as many as had been baptized,"—and he represents them as having all been "buried" in the observance of the ordinance, and, not by a *mode* of baptism, but *by baptism itself*. It is worthy of notice, moreover, that as the apostle was not personally acquainted with the Christians at Rome, his knowledge of their practice in this respect, must have been derived

from what was known as the *universal practice* of the primitive churches.

It being thus proved that the baptism of the New Testament, as described in the Epistles of Paul, and observed by the primitive Christians, was in reality *an immersion*, it follows that it would naturally be *so called*. And as this is universally admitted to have been the simple meaning of the word *baptisma* in ordinary Greek usage, the conclusion seems inevitable that this would be the sense attached to it in its application to Christian *immersion*. Indeed it would be impossible, for most minds, to say the least, to disconnect the nature of the thing designated, from the simple, established import of the term designating it. A term properly meaning to immerse familiarly applied to what was in all cases immersion, could not fail to designate it *as immersion*.

We have thus from no less than SEVEN distinct sources pertaining to the use of the word in the New Testament, in cases in which there is direct allusion to the rite of Christian baptism, presented facts which can in no instance be reconciled with any other position than that the word is used in its proper, modal sense, *to immerse*. The proof derived from any one of these sources we regard as being alone decisive in establishing the point in support of which it has been adduced. And when the great variety in the nature of the facts from which this proof is derived, is properly considered, it would seem that all possibility of doubt as to the import of the word in the New Testament, must be precluded.

To this let the reader add the fact that the conclusion thus arrived at from an examination of the use of the word in the New Testament alone, is established not less decisively by facts derived from several other separate and independent sources, as the acknowledged import of *baptizo*

in ordinary Greek usage, its usage among the Jews in their application of it to religious rites, the sense attached to it by the Greek Christian Fathers, and the manner in which it is uniformly rendered in the ancient translations of the New Testament. The facts existing, belonging to *any one* of these general divisions of the argument, as presented in this and a former treatise, are alone decisive of the whole question; so much so that did they not accord with the facts derived from other sources, we should consider it an unparalleled and unaccountable phenomenon in the history of language. Indeed, we believe that many of the facts which have been adduced would when taken separately, be regarded in any ordinary case as obviating the necessity of further proof. They are of such a nature as would lead an experienced linguist, judging from his knowledge of the established laws of language, to decide without hesitation as to the meaning of the word in all similar cases, and to regard his decision as not admitting of a doubt. What, then, must be the force of the evidence on any unprejudiced mind, when hundreds of such facts, thus *separately decisive*, and derived from every available source, *unite* in establishing the same position? We hesitate not to aver that we know of no philological fact in the whole range of Greek or Christian literature that is better established, than is the import of *baptizo* in its application to the rite of baptism in the New Testament. We should as soon think of calling in question the import of the words rendered *to eat* and *to drink*, employed in the institution of the Lord's supper, as to doubt that the word *baptizo* as used by our Lord and his apostles denotes the specific act of *immersion*.

Our object in the foregoing examination has been to show that immersion is what the word *baptizo* as used in the New Testament, *properly expresses*; that this is its simple *meaning*; and that, consequently, the only terms by

which its meaning can be truly expressed in other languages are those which, like itself, signify *to immerse*. It is, of course, involved that the only question which can exist respecting the *manner* in which baptism may be observed, is in reality simply a question respecting the manner of performing *immersion*. And the only query touching the practice of Pædobaptists, that can be raised, is, Can the rite of "*immersion*" be properly observed in a ceremony of mere *sprinkling*? And this query is, as will be seen at a glance, entirely parallel with another,—Can the command to *eat* and to *drink* in the appointment of the Supper, be obeyed by a use of the bread and wine in which nothing like eating or drinking is involved?

#### INTENT AND EXPLICITNESS OF THE COMMAND.

NOTWITHSTANDING the facts which have been adduced, drawn from every available source, and uniting their separate and independent testimony in placing beyond all possible ground of dispute, the position, that the simple meaning of BAPTIZO in the New Testament is *to immerse*, we imagine that the chief ground on which the mass of learned Pædobaptists justify the substitution of sprinkling for immersion, has not yet been reached. This is to be found, we apprehend, not so much in any doubt that the word properly and distinctively designates immersion, and was so understood by those addressed by our Lord and his apostles, as in an assumption, that immersion was enjoined only as a convenient or prevailing mode of washing or wetting; and that it was intended to be obligatory, not in itself, but only so far as the use of water is involved. It is, either directly or indirectly, through the influence of this consideration, we are convinced, more than that of any other, that the transaction designated by our Lord, *baptism*, is set aside by the great body of Pædobaptists, and a rite to which the word itself bears no relation, is introduced in its stead. This position is one which has too often been overlooked by Baptist writers. It has not, in consequence, received from them the attention which its real influence on the minds of those by whom it is urged, would seem to demand. It has generally been deemed sufficient to prove that the command, simply and properly expressed, is, *to be immersed*. If, however, it be a fact that the most *effective* consideration through which the simple import of the command is disregarded, lies beyond this, it cannot be unimportant that it should be met: and it evidently should be met in the precise form which it assumes in the minds of those by whom it is urged. A little examination



will make it apparent that the position assumed, is, in every aspect of it, as really and as obviously indefensible and inadmissible, as that which actually rejects the proper import of the word expressing the command. To a few suggestions adapted to illustrate this point, we now invite the reader's candid consideration. And we call attention,

1. To the difficulty of conceiving on what ground our Lord could have selected a term EXPRESSIVE OF A CERTAIN SPECIFIC ACT or mode, in instituting and describing a rite which was, as is assumed, intended to have no relation to mode or particular acts of any kind; especially when a multitude of terms really suited to his purpose, were at hand, and could easily have been employed to indicate the thing intended. Had it been his intention in instituting the Supper, to leave his disciples free to make such a use of the contents of the cup as they might deem most appropriate, is it conceivable that he should have selected for this purpose a term which was descriptive of a definite, specific act? Can any one persuade himself that in employing a term meaning *to drink*, he designed merely to indicate that the wine should be *used in any manner* which the worshipper might conceive to be significant of an interest in the "blood of the new covenant, shed for the remission of sins?"—in the manner, for example, indicated in Ex. 24 : 8, or Lev. 4 : 34, (comp. Num. 23 : 6, 7), and which would naturally have seemed to the mind of a Jew to be most appropriate and expressive? It is, to say the least, equally difficult to conceive for what purpose he should have commanded his disciples *to be immersed*, if, as is assumed, he intended to indicate in giving the command, that the thing involved in the rite was, *not immersion*, but a simple use of water without reference to mode.

2. Another consideration worthy of special notice,—although it seems to have been strangely overlooked by Pædobaptist authors in their examination of this subject,—is involved in the fact, that in THE VARIOUS FIGURATIVE ALLUSIONS to the rite of "immersion" in the New Testament,—embracing not less than twenty-one instances of the familiar use of *baptizo* and *baptisma* by the sacred writers,—it is never referred to as a washing or wetting, not even as conveying an allusion to the idea, but always specifically and simply *as immersion*. Immersion is not only an essential part, but the very substance, the *whole* of what is designated. One who is baptized or immersed "in the Holy Spirit," is conceived of, not as washed or wet by the Spirit, but simply as overwhelmed, brought into a state of complete subjection, plenteously endowed, for whatever purposes the Spirit is imparted. "Baptism in fire" is in no way associated with the idea of washing or wetting, except as being actually *contrasted* with it. The apostle in 1 Cor. 10 : 1, 2, although alluding to Christian baptism or immersion with direct reference to the purpose answered by it, does not find *the idea* involved in the rite,—as on the Pædobaptist assumption he ought to have done,—in the



ritual *washings* practised by the Israelites, but in the fact that they were "in the sea," and passed through it, "in the cloud," and under it, and were consequently in the condition of persons *immersed*; nothing like washing or wetting or purifying being even involved in the nature of the transaction. The "baptism" with which our blessed Lord was "baptized" as indicated in Mat. 20 : 22, and Luke 12 : 50, involved no allusion whatever to washing or wetting, but simply and solely to the idea of being *immersed* or *overwhelmed* in suffering and death.

These facts are decisive as to the light in which baptism or immersion was viewed by our Lord and his apostles. They place it beyond all ground of dispute, that they found *the idea* involved in "baptism," in *immersion*; that, so far from regarding the substance of the rite as consisting in a washing or wetting for a specific purpose, they were accustomed to conceive of it, and familiarly to allude to it *as baptism*, in cases in which the idea of washing or wetting was not even involved, and could in no way have entered into the conception formed of it.

3. From the foregoing suggestions it appears that the substitution of a mere act of wetting, such as sprinkling or pouring, for immersion, in the rite called baptism, leaves some of the most instructive and affecting passages in the New Testament, which find their explanation in the rite, without meaning. In the "baptism" indicated Mat. 20 : 22, 23, Luke 12 : 50, there is not the most distant allusion to the idea of washing or wetting. And to assume that the essence of baptism is to be found in this idea, is to destroy all connection between the figure employed, and the rite from which it is borrowed. See also 1 Cor. 10 : 1, 2; Mat. 3 : 11, etc.

And we here urge the inquiry, Was it the design of our Lord that his meaning in these passages should be appreciated by the "nations" among whom his gospel was to be proclaimed and his word disseminated? If so, it must be admitted that it was his design that they should identify the idea of "*overwhelming*," "*plunging*," "*immersion*," with the terms used in their respective languages, to denote "baptism."

It is through the influence of these passages in no small degree that the English word *baptize*, which at the time it became incorporated with the language, was, like the German *taufen*, commonly understood in the sense, *to immerse*, has, notwithstanding the perversion of the ordinance, retained for the most part unperverted, in its figurative uses, its proper, distinctive import. Nor is it to be overlooked as an unimportant fact in its relation to the baptismal controversy, that the great body of Pædobaptist writers have always been constrained to acknowledge that the specific idea of *immersion* or *overwhelming* is identified with the word as occurring in various passages in the *New Testament*. And its use in these passages, in which there is direct allusion to the Christian rite, ought to be regarded as decisive of *the import* of the

word as a *scriptural* term. Were the English New Testament to be translated into the Burmese language, and the idea attached, alike by Baptists and Pædobaptists, to the word *baptism* in Mat. 20 : 22,—the idea which it properly expresses,—to be expressed in that language, it would require the use of some term involving in its import the idea of *immersion*. And were the same translation to be adopted upon a recurrence of the word, with the same construction, in Luke 7 : 29, and Acts 19 : 3, it would unavoidably identify the idea of immersion with *the name of the Christian rite*, in the Burmese language. The case would be precisely the same with a translation made directly from the original text. And in the light of this illustration we ask again, Was it the design of the Master that his meaning in these passages should be appreciated? Does it meet his approval that Baptists and Pædobaptists have identified with the English word “baptism” in Mat. 20 : 22, and Luke 12 : 50, the idea of immersion or overwhelming? If so, it is undeniable that it is his will that this same idea be identified with the term designating “baptism” in every language into which his word is translated.

4. Immersion is uniformly specified as THE THING REQUIRED in the observance of the rite. The requisition is never to be washed or bathed *by immersion*, but always simply to be “*immersed*,”—leaving it to be learned from various incidental allusions to the rite, as in Mat. 3 : 11; Acts 10 : 47; 22 : 16, that the immersion is to be performed “*in water*.”

5. In various INCIDENTAL ALLUSIONS by the sacred writers to the rite of immersion, it is obvious that immersion as distinguished from the washing involved in it, was the thing to which their attention was directed. The reference in John 3 : 23, to “*much water*” as requisite to the administration of the rite in a particular case, obviously has respect to it specifically *as immersion*. See also Acts 8 : 36-39; Mat. 3 : 6-17.

6. The familiar ALLUSION TO THE NATURE OF THE RITE IN ROM. 6 : 4, AND COL. 2 : 12, is to it in its distinctive, specific character *as immersion*. It is referred to, not as a mere mode of bathing or washing or of using water, but in a manner which actually *distinguishes* it from all other modes. Immersion as involving a “burial” and “rising again,” is alluded to as a *characteristic, essential feature* of the rite. In fact, it is the only feature to which, in the explanation given of the import of the rite, allusion is had.

7. The rite of “IMMERSION,” AS SUCH, POSSESSES A SYMBOLICAL SIGNIFICANCY; a significancy which does not pertain to any other mode of using water. It is admitted without hesitation that the acts of *eating* and *drinking* performed in the observance of the Lord's supper, are, as such, designed to be significant; that they are intended to represent a *reception* of Christ's atonement and a *participation* by faith in its

benefits. The allusion to its significancy by the apostle in 1 Cor. 10: 16, 17, especially as compared with the language of John 6: 48-53, is considered decisive on this point. On the same ground the familiar and repeated allusions to the significancy of the rite of immersion in Rom. 6: 2-11, and Col. 2: 12-3: 4, especially when compared with Mat. 10. 37-39; John 5: 24; 11: 25; 14: 19, etc., afford decisive and incontrovertible proof, that it is *as immersion* significant; that in the burial and rising again there is a symbolical profession of spiritual conformity to the death and resurrection of Christ. The significancy of the ordinance is, consequently, identified with the act enjoined, and is inseparable from it.

8. To assume that the rite of immersion is not of perpetual obligation upon Christians is virtually to impeach the WISDOM OF THEIR DIVINE MASTER. If there be a command in the New Testament which more than others has the appearance of having been designed to extend to all lands, all nations, and all time, it is our Lord's final commission to his disciples: "Go ye *into all the world*, and preach the gospel to every creature."—"Go, disciple *all nations*, IMMERSING them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you, alway, even *unto the end of the world*."

It is not doubted by the great body of evangelical Christians that the acts of eating bread and drinking wine, in common use among the Jews at the celebration of the passover, were, when selected by our Lord and appropriated to the commemoration of his death, intended by him to be observed by his people in all ages. Even the declaration of an apostle, "As oft as ye *eat* this bread, and *drink* of this cup, ye do show the Lord's death, *till he come*," is considered decisive on this point. How much more decisive, if possible, is the explicit declaration of the Master himself in Mat. 23: 19, 20, and Mark 16: 15, 16, with regard to the intent and perpetuity of the law enjoining Christian *immersion*. Is it to be believed that the transaction specified and enjoined in these passages as the rite of Christian profession, was designed to be observed only by those among whom it was customary for other purposes, or only so long as it might accord with the convenience or wishes of those on whom it was enjoined? that in the intention of the Lawgiver his disciples were *not* to go "*into all the world*" with the command relating to "*immersion*," were *not* to "*immerse*" the converted from among "*all nations*," were *not* to consider their commission as extending in this respect "*unto the end of the world*;" but that in most parts "*of the world*," among most "*nations*," and in the ages succeeding the apostolic, they were with his approbation to disregard and set aside the appointed rite, and to seek to fulfil its design by the substitution of another, which *they* might conceive to be more suitable or more convenient? Is it to be be-

lieved that he intended that the language of his commission, when properly translated, should not, in any one of the languages of the "nations" contemplated and referred to by him in giving the commission, be expressive of his will concerning them? but that while expressly prescribing for them "immersion," he in reality intended that they should observe a ceremony bearing no resemblance to it?

Is it possible that those who virtually assume the position, which we have thus stated,—and not, we think, too strongly,—have properly considered the startling implications which it involves, or the consequences to which, if consistently carried out and applied, it would inevitably lead. Where shall we find an intimation in the New Testament, which we may feel to be decisive, that any doctrine or precept of the gospel was designed for all nations and all ages, if not in the language of Christ's final commission to his disciples as recorded in Mat. 23 : 13-20?

9. Finally, the rite of immersion is invested with a special interest by the fact that it was, under peculiarly marked and affecting circumstances, observed by our Lord himself; and that his disciples in submitting to it, are directly imitating HIS EXAMPLE.

It adds much to the interest and profit with which the ordinance of the Supper is observed, to be able to reflect that the history of its institution is identified with the act of the Master; and that its observance by his people is the repetition of a transaction in which he himself participated. What Christian's heart has not been inspired with the most pleasing and salutary emotions, as, in observing the rite, he has reverted to the scene recorded in Mat. 26 : 26-23; as he has contemplated the Saviour seated at the table with his disciples, breaking and blessing the bread in their presence, and saying to them, "This is my body which is broken for you," taking the cup, and giving thanks, and delivering it to them with the impressive words, "This is my blood of the new covenant"—"Drink ye all of it?" It is an interesting reflection that these were the acts of *Christ*; that these were *his* words. The very form of expression, "This is *my* body," "This is *my* blood," invests the fact presented, with an interest which the simple announcement of it by his apostles, could never have created. But let the nature of the rite be essentially changed, or another transaction commemorative of the death of Christ, be substituted in its place,—let the bread, for example, broken or unbroken, be simply exhibited to the view of the church, in the manner in which the show-bread was used in the Jewish tabernacle,—let the wine, as a symbol of the "blood of the new covenant," be used as was the blood which ratified the Jewish covenant, Ex. 24 : 8;—and it would at once be felt that the transaction, although observed in commemoration of the death of Christ endured "for the remission of sins," was yet one which HE had never instituted, in which he had never participated, with which his acts and his sayings were not identified. And

the only effect of a reference, either in the remarks of the administrator, or in the reflections of the worshippers, to the scene recorded Mat. 26: 26-28, would be to awaken a painful sense of incongruity between the original rite and the substitute. And we doubt not that a similar sensation has often been experienced as the disciples of the Redeemer have contemplated the scene of his "*immersion*" in the river Jordan, and have heard him exclaim, "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness"; and have then turned away, and observed, instead of the rite thus hallowed by his example, a ceremony entirely dissimilar to it in its essential characteristics as an external transaction.

Wherever the rite of immersion originally appointed, has been observed by the disciples of Christ, their minds have naturally and almost involuntarily reverted to his example. It has been one of their most delightful reflections, while observing the ordinance, that they were treading in his footsteps;—a reflection which has filled them with joy and hope and courage; which has forcibly reminded them while in the act of consecrating themselves to his service, of their obligations to be conformed to him in all things involving duty. Their minds have reverted to the scene of his baptism, narrated in Mat. 3: 13-17, and Mark 1: 9-11, with an interest equal, to say the least, to that which the remembrance of his participation in the institution of the Supper, is adapted to excite. They have recalled the words, "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness"; and have felt that they were surely as applicable to the case of the disciple as of the Master. And they have rejoiced in the consciousness of enduring the self-denial, and assuming the obligations involved in submission to an ordinance which was not unbecoming their Divine Lord and Redeemer. And it cannot be doubted that the Spirit of God has often by his special influence, given these reflections and emotions an indelible impression, and made them effectual to the most salutary results. And is there no responsibility involved in the act of setting aside the rite with which these pleasing associations of thought and feeling and purpose are connected, and substituting in its place a ceremony with which they are utterly incompatible; a ceremony which tends in various ways to destroy all practical connection between the example of Christ and the act of his disciples in the observance of what is called Christian baptism? Is it possible that Pædobaptists have generally appreciated the tendency and effect of their unauthorized substitution, in these respects? Is it possible that they have duly considered how much that is joyous, and pure, and lovely, and soul-animating in the emotions which a view of the example of Christ is adapted to inspire, is lost by the exchange of the divinely appointed rite of Christian "*immersion*" for a human invention? an invention which is not merely not baptism, but fails even to preserve its significancy?



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HAVING examined the Baptist Scriptural Catechism prepared by Rev. H. C. FISH, we cordially recommend it to the churches, believing it to possess peculiar excellences; among which may be mentioned especially the following:

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2. The general use of Scriptural language in the answers.
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FOR THE MORE ADVANCED MEMBERS OF SABBATH  
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BY HENRY C. FISH,

Pastor of the Baptist Church, Somerville, N. J.

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Ye shall lay up these my words in your heart, and in your soul.  
DEUT. xi. 18.

The word have I hid in mine heart.—Ps. cxix. 11.

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